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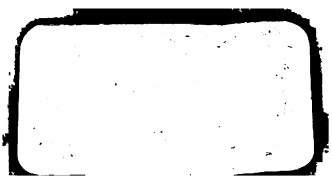
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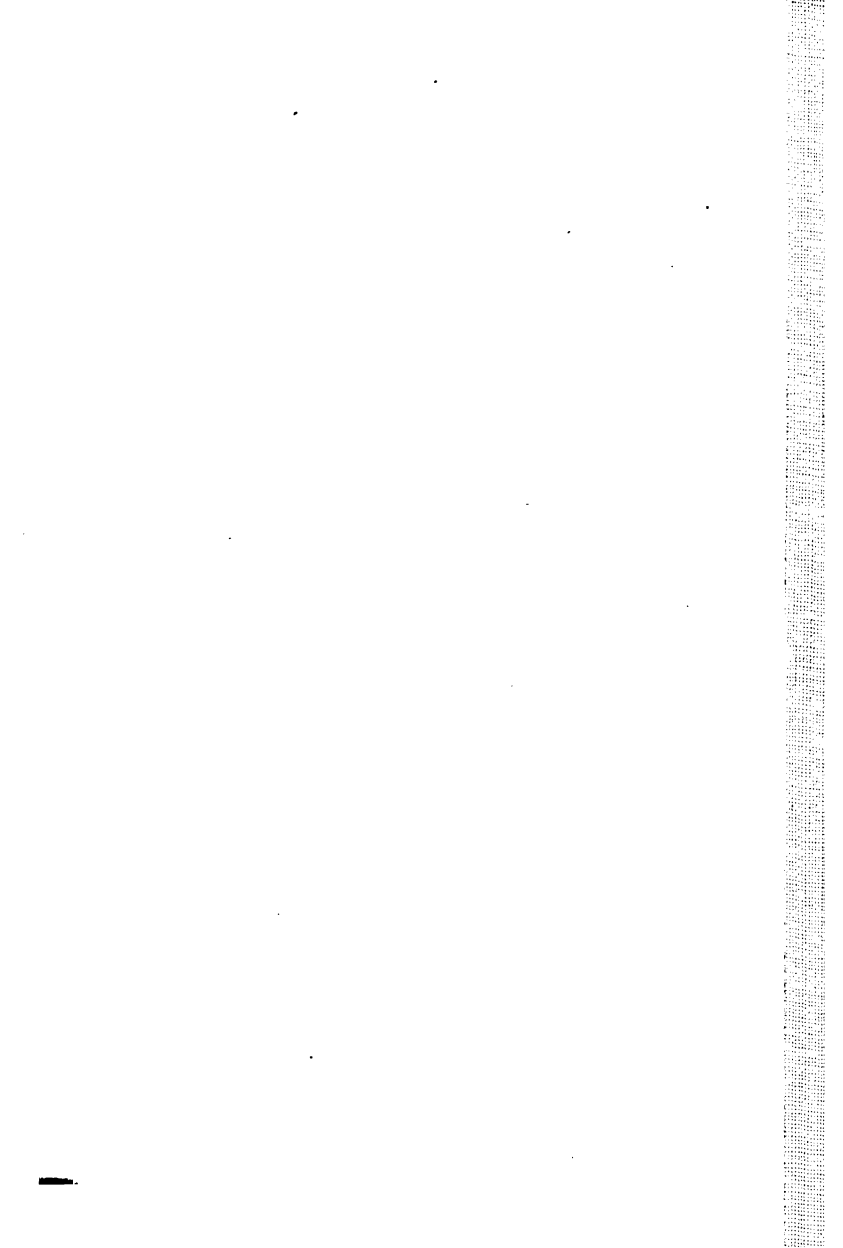
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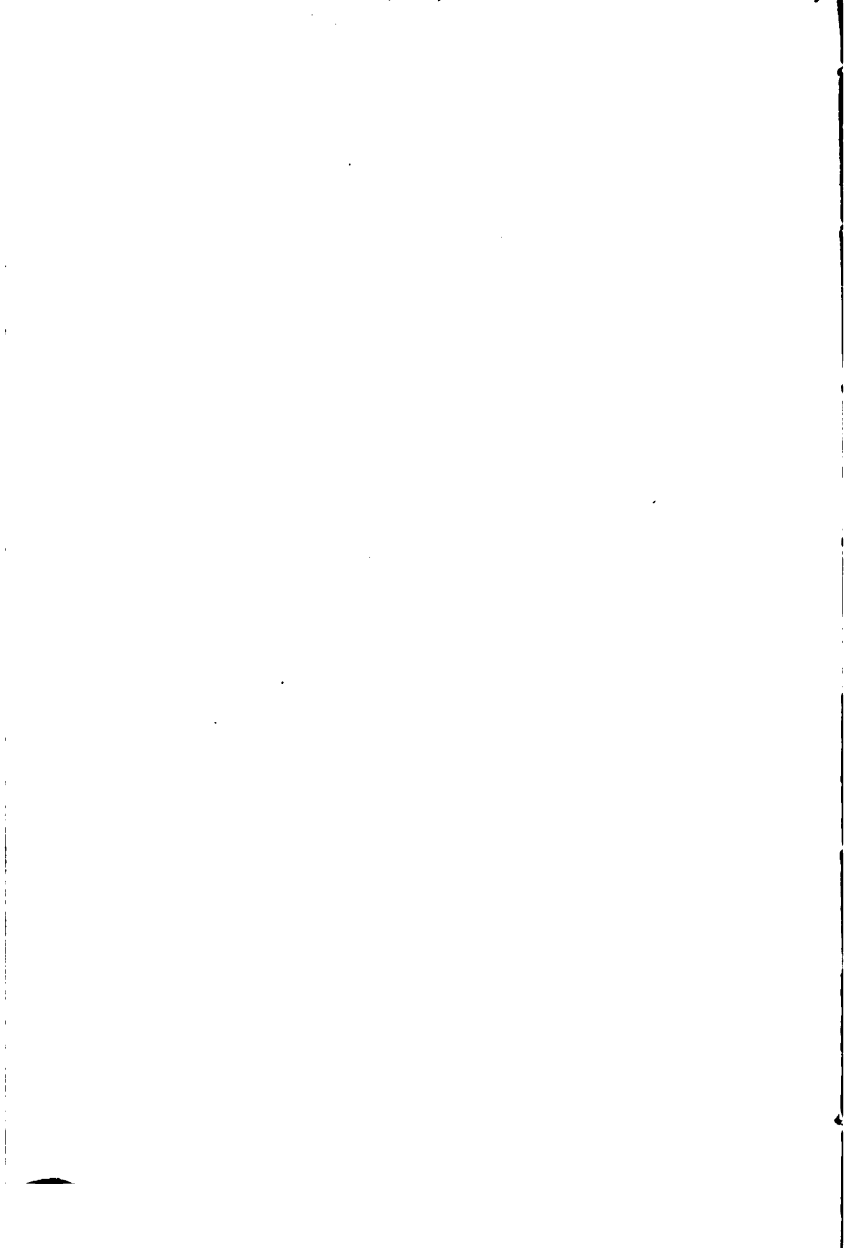
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# EXPERT AUCTION

A CLEAR EXPOSITION OF THE GAME  
AS ACTUALLY PLAYED BY EXPERTS  
WITH NUMEROUS SUGGESTIONS  
FOR IMPROVEMENT

ALSO 1917 LAWS

BY  
E. V. SHEPARD

AUTHOR OF  
"SCIENTIFIC AUCTION BRIDGE"



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# EXPERT AUCTION



## EXPERT AUCTION

Expert Auction demands proficiency in several distinct departments of the game—the bid, the play, and the laws. Aptitude, study, and practice with experts are needed to produce really good players. The ordinary home game, and even the best that the great majority of social clubs can offer, is poor compared to the game regularly played in clubs which make a specialty of Auction. Luck is so large a factor that average players with good hands fail to realize that an expert could win from 20 per cent. to 40 per cent. more with the same cards. Yet it is not at all difficult to play well. The first step and usually the hardest is to realize that your present game lacks something. Every one's game can be bettered, and if you honestly seek improvement you will find it.

It is possible to deal 635,013,559,600 different Auction hands. The best possible system of bid and play is that which, if consistently followed, would win the most possible points if each of these hands could be played. All this has been determined with mathematical precision, and the resulting scientific system of bid and play averages to give the best pos-

sible results. To make easier reading most of the mathematical probabilities have been omitted. But each bid and play which the reader is advised to use is based upon mathematical fact and practical experience.

## VALUING HANDS

Sizing up a hand is simple but very important. A good player can reckon at a glance the probable number of tricks a hand is worth, both at trumps or at no trumps, either as declarer, as dummy, or as one of the defenders.

No such thing exists as a "sure trick" or a "certain winner" prior to the determination of the call at which a hand is to be played. Even an ace may be trumped. It is convenient, however, to speak of "sure tricks," "probable tricks," "possible tricks," and "losing cards." The play of the hand also develops "chance winners" because several high cards falling together make a "losing card" good for a trick, because a low trump kills a probable winner or because the last cards of a suit cannot be trumped.

As used in this book, an ace or both K-Q are "quick tricks"; that is, probable tricks on the first or second round of a suit. Any card having better than even chances to take a trick is called a probable trick.

## COUNTING TRUMP TRICKS

On your own trump call in a suit of five or more cards you will ordinarily win a trick for each trump held, minus the loss of a trick for each missing ace, king, or

queen of trumps (called the high honors). Thus an "established" (or "set-up") trump suit like A-K-Q-9-6 will ordinarily take five tricks. One containing K-Q-J-8-5 can be valued at four tricks, and A-Q-J-7-3 must be counted at four tricks. If your partner holds the missing king of the last hand, he is counting it as one of his tricks and you must not duplicate his count. If your left-hand opponent has this king guarded you cannot catch it.

To average to win two tricks in a 5-card trump suit, merely on its length, its top card must not be lower than the jack nor must its other cards all be the lowest possible. You will, however, average to win three tricks on a 6-card trump suit even when they are the lowest possible cards. To probably win all the tricks in your trump suit you must hold 5 or 6 to A-K-Q, 7, 8, or 9 to A-K, and 10 to the ace without the king.

Such probably established suits are worth the same at no trumps and as a "side suit" at trumps, provided your trumps are sufficiently strong to pull out all opposing ones, so that your "plain suit" will not be trumped.

On partner's trump call count as tricks the cards he regards as lost—each high trump honor. He has usually 5 trumps and so expects to lead them 3 rounds before exhausting opponents. If you hold 4 or 5 trumps he will probably need to lead them once less, so you count one trick for such length of trumps, regardless of their denominations. In addition to saving him a lead and the possible loss of a trick, you give him a means of entry to your hand, unless all of your trumps

are lower than any of his. Your partner may have only 4 trumps or he may have an established suit which he estimates as probably able to win 5 tricks or more without your help. Consequently it is wholly problematical how much assistance your trumps will really be, but figuring on average cases and the probability that your side suits will not run precisely the same length as his, you may expect to do some "ruffing." On that basis you can estimate 6 trumps as worth 2 tricks and 8 trumps as worth 3 tricks. Aside from tricks due to high honors and to unusual length of suit, dummy must count on 2 tricks for ruffing a void suit or 1 trick for ruffing a suit in which he has a singleton—provided he holds at least 3 trumps. Opponents will probably lead trumps to prevent ruffs. Even if your partner wins the first trump trick, unless your side has the ace of your singleton suit, you will be unable to use one of only two trumps to ruff it, because opponents will at once remove your last trump. So with only 2 trumps you can count on but one ruff of a void suit and on none of a singleton suit. With only one trump you must not calculate on being able to ruff a void suit at all.

Opponents must count tricks in declarer's suit with extreme caution. The ace or both K-Q, either K-J-10 or Q-J-10 are each worth a sure trump trick if held on declarer's right. The ace, the K-Q and Q-J-10 must be counted for only a trick if held on his left. But K-Q-X (X meaning any card smaller than the lowest card specifically mentioned), K-J-10 and Q-J-10-X can be counted for 2 tricks, if in that position.

K-X or Q-X-X must be counted as a probable trick

at declarer's left, but cannot be reckoned as even a possible trick if situated at his right. Either king or queen requires an unusual combination of two lower cards to guard them, or else at least 3 other trumps with them, to be counted as probable tricks when situated at declarer's right. J-X-X-X is a probable trick and any five trumps not lower than the 7 give a probable trick on either side of declarer.

### COUNTING SIDE TRICKS

All outside aces, also guarded kings, with two exceptions, count as probable tricks for all players. If a king is on the right of a bidder of that suit it must be guarded, as already noted for the king of trumps under similar circumstances. The king of a suit of 7 or more cards cannot be counted as a probable trick, owing to its liability to be trumped.

A 3-card suit has precisely even chances of being trumped on its third round or of going safely. Add to this the chances that both ace and king may fall together, and either Q-J-10 or Q-J-9 becomes worth a probable trick to their holder. If in suits of over 3 cards they can be counted as probable tricks only by the declarer, by the dummy if he holds fair trump support, and by a side player only when he is unusually strong in trumps or in re-entry cards in his other two plain suits.

Either declarer or dummy can count a probable trick for each card of an established side suit, provided he is strong enough in trumps to prevent ruffs. If dummy is rather weak in trumps his side suit cannot be safely

counted as worth over 3 tricks. If he has only 1 or 2 small trumps the side suit is probably good for only 2 tricks, because one or both opponents are apt to be strong in trumps and to kill the side suit by removing re-entry to dummy before the declarer can exhaust opposing trumps; if dummy has a "chicane" hand (one void of trumps) this is almost certain to be true.

A side player cannot well estimate his established plain suit as probably worth over 2 tricks, unless he has abundant re-entry and considerable trump strength, so that declarer can be run out of trumps.

Re-entry cards at trumps are limited to aces and guarded kings. At no trumps are added "extra-well-guarded" queens (queen with three others or queen with two others, one of which is a lower honor) provided there are less than 5 cards in their suit. A 5-card suit is not apt to be opponents' strong suit and hence they are not likely to lead it often enough for the queen to win.

Six tricks average to be won by trumps, leaving only 7 tricks to be taken in the other 3 suits. It is thus evident that only their aces, favorably located kings, and strong combinations of honors can safely be counted on as probable tricks under all circumstances.

## NO TRUMPS

At no trumps the probable winners are: aces, protected kings, extra-well-guarded queens, all cards of a "solid" suit (established suit) and all cards of an establishable suit minus the tricks necessary to clear it.

Just as at trumps, you figure that a long suit at no

trumps has its first 3 tricks won by ace, king, and queen. Three rounds will usually leave the possessor of a long suit with all its remaining "extra" cards or "long" cards, as follows: 2 from a 5-card suit; 3 from a 6-card suit; but a 4-card suit cannot be calculated to leave a long card, as usually another player has as many or more cards in the suit. Suits of 7, 8, or 9 cards generally require only 2 leads to clear them.

The declarer, on spade calls, can count his probable tricks in the following hand as shown below:

Spades, A-K-9-6-5; Hearts, A-Q-J-7-3; Clubs, —; Diamonds, 10-4-2. 4 spade tricks, 4 heart tricks; total, 8 tricks.

Spades, A-Q-J-10-6-2; Hearts, K-6; Clubs, Q-J-9; Diamonds, Q-5. 5 spade tricks, 1 heart trick, 1 club trick; total, 7 tricks.

Spades, A-K-J-8-7-5-3; Hearts, K; Clubs, J-10-7-4-3; Diamonds, —. 7 spade tricks, 2 club tricks; total, 9 tricks.

The partner of a player bidding hearts must count his probable assistance on these hands as:

Spades, K-6; Hearts, Q-9-2; Clubs, 7-5-4-2; Diamonds, A-J-8-6. 1 spade trick (unless a bidder of that suit sits at his left), 1 heart trick, 1 diamond trick; total, 3 tricks.

Spades, —; Hearts, J-8-5; Clubs, K-Q-8-5-2; Diamonds, 10-7-6-4-3. 2 heart tricks (through ruffing spades), 1 club trick; total, 3 tricks.

Spades, J-6-4; Hearts, K-9-6-3; Clubs, 10; Diamonds, J-9-8-5-4. 3 heart tricks (1 for king, 1 for ruff, and 1 because there are 4 trumps); total, 3 tricks.

Spades, 9; Hearts, 8-4; Clubs, A-K-Q-J; Diamonds,

10-8-7-6-3-2. No ruff can be counted because trumps are too short. 3 club tricks only, because weak in trumps; total, 3 tricks.

Spades, J-6; Hearts, K-J-9; Clubs, 10-7; Diamonds, A-K-Q-J-9-2. 1 heart trick, 6 diamond tricks (established suit and strong trump assistance); total, 7 tricks.

Against a bidder of clubs a player can count his probable tricks on these hands as:

Spades, 10-6-3; Hearts, A-J-9-3; Clubs, K-7; Diamonds, A-9-6-2. 1 in hearts, 1 in clubs, 1 in diamonds; total, 3 tricks, provided he sits at declarer's left; otherwise he cannot count a club trick.

Spades, A-K-9; Hearts, 7-4-3; Clubs, J-10-4-2; Diamonds, 8-7-4. 2 spade tricks, 1 club trick; total, 3 tricks.

Spades, J-8; Hearts, 6-5; Clubs, A-8-5-3-2; Diamonds, A-K-Q-J. 2 club tricks, 3 diamond tricks; total, 5 tricks.

Trick counting at no trumps, especially when bid more to show general help than with the intention of playing them, is less certain than at trumps. The great advantage that the declarer has in having the lead come up to him, and in knowing his resources the moment that dummy is boarded, enables him to at once strike to establish his best suit, while his adversaries are still groping to find out where their joint strength chiefly lies.

The first hand below is probably worth 5 tricks to its no-trump bidder—2 spade tricks and 1 trick in each other suit. The second hand is probably worth only its 4 aces. The third hand is probably good for 1 trick

in each of spades, hearts, and diamonds, with 5 tricks in clubs; total, 8 tricks.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A-Q-2         | K-J           | K-J-5-3      | Q-J-9-7         |
| 2. | A-10-6        | A-7-4-2       | A-9-8        | A-6-4           |
| 3. | A-9           | K-J-9         | A-K-Q-9-6    | A-8-3           |

Such hands constitute genuine "Bridge" no-trumpers. The more modern varieties bid for special purposes will be discussed later on.

## THE BASIS OF SOUND BIDDING

If all possible hands were to be dealt and played at the declaration best suiting the 13 cards held by the dealer, the remaining 3 players having no voice in the matter, the declarer would average to win 4.94 tricks per deal, while dummy's average assistance would be 2.69 tricks, a total of 7.63 tricks per hand. These figures presume that each player makes his best possible plays, with the declarer deriving no advantage from playing both hands of his side. Thus hands average to be worth 5 tricks on their best call, while dummy averages to be worth a full 2 tricks to the declarer.

Sound bidding is based upon these averages. In the absence of evidence to the contrary a player must assume that his partner holds average strength. Consequently you assume that your partner's hand is probably worth 5 tricks on his best call, and has 2 tricks help for your own, even when he makes no bid. Under ordinary circumstances there is no reason, in fact no excuse, for bidding a hand which will probably yield barely average results both on its best call and on partner's best declaration.

In actual play good bidders usually strike the calls best suited to their joint hands, and the final declaration ordinarily develops strength much above average.

As half the hands played go game, it follows that half the time the joint tricks won by side players do not exceed three. Consequently a hand worth 2 quick tricks against opponents' calls must be rated as above average defensive strength. If such a hand is also of nearly average strength on its own call it then deserves to be bid.

A sound bid, therefore, indicates that a special reason for bidding exists. An original bid under ordinary circumstances may be due to any one of the following reasons:

1. Shows a hand probably worth 5 tricks on its own call and more than 2 tricks help for partner.
2. Shows a hand probably worth only 4 tricks if left in, but worth at least 2 quick tricks on partner's call or against adversaries', with added possibilities.
3. Shows a hand probably worth over 5 tricks if undisturbed, although it may yield partner only average assistance or even less.

No other sound reasons exist for the action of the player who makes the first bid.

To legitimately raise partner's bid after a subsequent player has overbid ordinarily requires the raiser to hold more than 2 probable tricks.

Under ordinary circumstances these basic principles of sound bidding should be strictly observed. Exceptional circumstances and bids thereunder will be discussed later.

## ATTACKING HANDS

### AT TRUMPS:

An attacking hand is one of sufficient strength to probably win, with partner's aid, at least the odd trick on its best call. The minimum strength necessary at trumps is 4 tricks, of which 3 should be in the trump suit.

To spare small trumps to ruff your adversaries' long suits and still be able to lead them often enough to exhaust opposing trumps necessitates a long trump suit.

The high honors are also requisite to prevent an adversary winning your trump leads and returning his established plain suit for you to ruff. Both length and strength in trumps are necessary to command the situation.

The next best thing to holding both is to have either great strength, as A-K-Q-J, or great length—not fewer than 6 trumps.

It is unsafe to depend upon only 4 trumps yielding a long trump. To probably win three tricks in a suit of less than 5 cards requires the 3 high honors in a 3-card suit. A 4-card suit requires either 3 high honors or

1. A-K with J or the 10-9
2. A-Q        "    "    "
3. K-Q        "    "    "
4. A-J-10-9
5. K-J-10-9

Such combinations must yield 2 tricks, and will probably yield 3 tricks by leading through from dummy. With some of the above combinations only exceptional circumstances can justify a bid of even a minor suit. Here is one such illustration—the score is bad and 1-Club has been bid by the dealer, when the next player holds:

Spades, A-K; Hearts, 8-6-5-3-2; Clubs, 8-7-4; Diamonds, K-J-10-9.

It is now proper to show that he can probably win 1-odd if left alone and that he has better than average assistance for partner's calls, by bidding 1-Diamond.

Other combinations (like A-K-J-X, A-Q-J-X or K-Q-J-X), with a trick or two in another suit, do not need exceptional circumstances to make a bid perfectly sound.

### ATTACKING DECLARATIONS AT NO TRUMPS

The chief distinction between a trump and a no-trump hand comes in the way the strength lies. If concentrated mainly in one suit, especially if it lies largely in a long suit of low cards, it is a trump hand. If the strength is scattered through 3 or 4 suits, particularly if it fails to give the spade or heart suits at least three probable tricks, it is a no-trump hand. Frequently either strong trumps or no trumps can be declared upon the same cards.

A single weak suit may ruin the chances to go game at no trumps. Therefore a trump declaration apt to win the game, or one probably able to win as many tricks as a no-trumper which cannot go game, is preferable whenever all four suits are not doubly guarded, or unless three suits can be stopped once and the fourth suit consists of a long set-up suit. Do not consider a suit positively establishable and go no trump, unless this suit can be established by means of the re-entry in your weakest suit, if game can surely be won at an alternative trump declaration.

Any no-trumper without an ace, unless all suits are well guarded, is dangerous and is legitimate only as a desperate resort. Your adversaries can use their aces to establish a suit against single stops, and will probably count 30 honor points on aces; possibly 100 points, against you, in addition to the score for setting you.

A trump declaration reduces the dangers from strong opposing side-suit cards through ability to ruff. At no trumps established suits, sequences, and long cards are less easily escaped. On the other hand, a trump call reduces dummy's available winning cards, because opponents hurry to make their good cards before the declarer can exhaust trumps and establish suits against them. No such immediate reduction occurs at no trumps in dummy's strength, and the declarer hastens to utilize the joint strength of his 2 hands before adversaries discover their best plan of action. This is why strong trump calls are more certain in results than strong no-trump declarations; also why for desperate cases the no-trumpers may turn out best.

Five probable winners properly distributed over at least 3 suits, including at least one ace, is a fair average hand upon which to declare no trumps. Four probable winners, unless all are aces or at least well-guarded kings, is a weak hand, since the average adverse strength will be to the declarer's strength as 11 to 9. Only the advantage of his position can overcome this handicap.

Four aces in one hand urge a no-trump bid, unless the game can be won at trumps, on account of immediate power to stop adverse suits and establish partner's long suit; also on account of the 100 honor-point value of 4 aces in one hand.

Three aces do not compel a no-trump bid. The best chance often lies in supporting partner's bid, although the 3 aces usually bring a hand up to the necessary strength to make some opening bid.

Two aces and another guarded suit give good grounds for a no-trumper when pushed by the score.

The ace of one suit and an established diamond or club suit of six or more cards constitute what is known as "one-suit no-trumper." The power of minor suits under present laws makes this species of no-trumper far less common and of less value than formerly.

In similar manner, 6 or 7 probable winners, distributed in any way, give a reasonable hand for no-trump bids, if no satisfactory trump call is possible.

Unevenly divided cards, giving part long and part very short suits, unless the latter are well guarded, greatly increase the risks of a no-trumper. Irregular hands are, as a rule, best adapted to trump bids.

A theoretical average hand would contain 1 ace,

1 king, 1 queen, 1 jack, and 1 ten. If the strength is well distributed over the various suits, a hand containing one more king or queen than this average hand is suitable for a no-trumper.

An established suit adds greatly to the strength of a hand. An establishable suit is less desirable, as it involves risk in setting it up. Sequences also add strength. If moderately high, like J-10-9-8-5, they insure stopping the run of adverse suits and make an excellent lever to pry out opposing higher cards. Any guarded suit offers an obstacle to opposing strength and gives re-entry to a hand. Cards of re-entry are essential to success at no trumps, as a player is helpless, no matter how good a suit he holds, if he cannot get in. At trumps re-entry can often be obtained by ruffing, but no such refuge is found at no trumps.

## LIGHT NO-TRUMPERS

There have been introduced from time to time various forms of the "light no-trump bid." Any hand is light which is not at least a king above average, and with its strength favorably distributed over more than 2 suits. The present laws have added so greatly to the fighting power of minor suits that to bid such a hand is chiefly to show general help and to forestall an opponent who may hold a better no-trump hand. This is a feature of the "forward game" (which loses no chance to show strength to partner). Unless a bidder can see at least 3 probable tricks help for partner, with other possibilities, his bid cannot be justified, since he has small hope of going game at no trump, and compels partner to bid Two instead of One if he desires to call a suit make.

Sitting tight with a hand able to defeat the no-trumper whenever such a hand cannot probably go game is an excellent counter to very light no-trump bids. Doubling the bid instead of bidding 2-No Trumps over it is another. This double requests partner to bid any good suit he may hold, or to bid 2-No Trumps if he has scattered strength, as explained more fully under "Doubling and Redoubling."

Facts are stubborn things, in Auction as elsewhere. We must never forget that an average hand can win 5 tricks on its own best declaration, and that it has between 2 and 3 tricks assistance for partner's call, with a trick or more against adversaries' strong declaration, as shown under "The Basis of Sound Bidding." Under ordinary circumstances a hand which does not exceed the average, either offensively or defensively, or both, has no excuse for a bid. Unusual reasons for weaker bids may be score necessities or the personalities of the players. One other strong reason for weak no-trump bids is the use between partners of "informatory bids" (those made to show partner assistance without desire to be left in). Such bids were common in the early days of Auction. They are scientific and involve little risk with expert partners. Their use is discussed under "Informatory Bids."

The only purely informatory bid now in common use is the light no-trump bid, although it is the most apt to remain undisturbed and the most dangerous to its bidder. But its greater possible reward has caused it to survive.

Recognizing its dangers, the first precaution taken by light no-trump bidders was to ask that partner always take them out by bidding any 5-card suit. This minimized bad losses, but it also lessened the chances to go game. In general, a take-out from weakness on less than 6 low cards gains nothing. But whether or not your partner bids weak no-trumpers, you should always take him out with a major bid on a long suit warranting such an original bid. You should bid a similar hand of diamonds or clubs only if he has re-

quested such procedure, especially if the suit is established.

"The system," as its advocates called it, was introduced in an attempt to obviate some of the dangers of the weak no-trumpers. Its maxim was: "Partner, I never bid a no-trumper when weak in spades and hearts unless I can bid 2-No Trumps if you attempt a major take-out." Regardless of his no-trump support for his partner's call, a player of this system always overcalls with a 5-card major suit. His bid of Two in a minor suit would show lack of support and be a warning that he held no high-card support for his partner's no-trumper.

A "system player" might bid 1-No Trump on the following hand, which is a queen below average:

Spades, J-10-8-4; Hearts, K-9-7-2; Clubs, A-5-3-2; Diamonds, 6.

His help for either major suit is quite likely 4 tricks. He bids with no desire to play the hand unless dummy can assist. He trusts that his partner may be able to make a major bid. His opponents must bid Two if they wish to play the hand, and it is unlikely that any call they may make will go game. But here is the obverse story: nobody will probably make a major bid when the no-trumper bidder holds 4 cards of each major suit; either counter, already mentioned, may be successfully employed against him; unless his partner has a minor suit bid or a no-trumper of his own, the game can hardly be won.

The system no more justifies such a light bid than would any extreme ideas on bidding such filmy hands.

It is well to bear in mind these mathematical facts:

your partner will hold 5 cards or more of your suit as follows:

|      |   |                   |    |              |
|------|---|-------------------|----|--------------|
| with | 1 | card in your hand | 35 | in 100 times |
| "    | 2 | "                 | 26 | "            |
| "    | 3 | "                 | 18 | "            |
| "    | 4 | "                 | 11 | "            |

Thus if you have 3 cards in each of the major suits your partner has only 36 in 100 chances to hold a suit of 5 cards or more in either one. With a doubleton in each there are 52 in 100 chances, or with 1 spade and 3 hearts there are 53 in 100 chances for a take-out in one or the other. But you hardly desire to have him bid your shortest suit. It is only when you have considered the probabilities that you can realize how futile the system is in the long run. In fact, it hampers a bidder, without extra compensation.

Going even an added step in the wrong direction, some players who believe in the "forward game" (one where no opportunity to bid is lost) bid 1-No Trump on hands possessing strength only in the major suits, like this:

Spades, A-K-10-6; Hearts, A-K-7-3; Clubs, 9-5-2; Diamonds, 8-4.

If they realized that only 22 in 100 times can their partner make a major bid, they would abandon such practice. The only reasonable alternatives are: first, to make no bid, realizing that opponents' chances to go game are very small when you hold 4 probable tricks against all their possible calls; second, to bid One in its best suit—spades—on such a square hand. If left in, you have more than even chances to make

the odd, although there is less than 1 in 20 chances that nobody else has a higher legitimate bid. If your partner bids you have unusual help for him, or you can then shift to 1-No Trump. The informatory bid of 1-Spade is far less dangerous than 1-No Trump and is nearer the truth.

Good tacticians, in fact, first make even a minor suit bid on many really powerful no-trump hands, to note what bids follow. Take a hand like this:

Spades, A-10; Hearts, 7; Clubs, A-K-Q-J-8-5; Diamonds, A-Q-J-6.

Ordinary players jump at this chance to bid 1-No Trump, but an expert is likely to bid 1-Club. If his partner calls 1-Heart the shift is made to 1-No Trump. If an opponent bids the hearts an increase is made in the club bid. With a single stop in spades and a long heart suit against you the hand will never make game, while it can probably do so at clubs if partner has any assistance.

A very long suit argues other long suits somewhere. In a very general way the hands around the board usually, but not necessarily, correspond in the lengths of suits.

## **BIDDING VOCABULARY**

To avoid needless repetitions in the following chapters, and to aid the less experienced players to select the proper expression when referring to bids, some of the common terms used by players and writers are given below:

### **ANTICIPATORY:**

A bid made to show a lead in anticipation of what the next opponent may bid.

### **ASSISTING:**

An increase by partner of your no-trump or suit bid after an opponent has overcalled your last bid. A supporting bid.

### **ATTACKING:**

A bid made on an attacking hand. A business bid. One seeking a contract.

### **BLUFF:**

One made merely to mislead an opponent. A boosting bid.

### **BOOSTING:**

A higher bid than the hand is worth, made in hope that an adversary will overbid and thus suffer a loss instead of going game.

### **BUSINESS:**

A bid which means business. One desiring the contract. An attacking bid of strength.

### **DEFENSIVE:**

One made to save points. A protective bid. As when a player lacking high cards takes his partner out of no trumps because he believes the no-trump hand can help his suit bid more than his low cards can help the no-trumper. Does not necessarily desire a contract, but is made to enlighten partner; to bluff an adversary into an overbid; to show partner the best lead to defeat opponents or to save game.

### **DESPERATION:**

A bid not warranted by cards held, trusting to find a suit which partner can support, to save game by flag-flying or to bluff an opponent into overbidding his hand.

### **FLAG-FLYING:**

Deliberately overbidding to prevent opponents from going game. Preferring to be set rather than to let adversaries win the rubber. Such tactics are never warranted when either you or your opponents are a "game in" (one game for one side and none for the

other), or when neither has a game. Overbidding to take a slight loss rather than surrender the "rubber game" (the odd game) is justifiable.

#### **FORCED:**

A first-round bid made over a previous bid, but which would not have been made as an opening bid. Sometimes applied to any bid made after some other player has opened the bidding. This definition is too broad and is apt to lead to mistaken conclusions.

#### **FORWARD:**

A bid not fully in accord with sound practice. Such as making a suit bid without tops or bidding gauzy no-trumpers.

#### **FREE:**

A free bid is one made by the dealer or by another player when previous players have made no bid. It ordinarily includes a bid of One over a 1-bid in a lower suit, and also any unnecessarily high bid. One presumably in strict accord with cards held, unless made over a lower bid.

#### **GAME-GOING:**

A bid apt to win game. One in no trumps, spades, or hearts. A major bid. Minor bids must win 5-odd tricks at a love score to go game. The chances of a side holding cards to win 4-odd are to their chances to hold cards good for 5-odd as 67 is to 25. As major suits can outbid minor ones, and as they are preferable

when a choice of bids exists, the number of games actually won from a love score by the major calls may run from 10 to 15 times as great as those won by minor calls.

**INFERENCEAL:**

A bid based on deductions drawn from the bids made by the other players.

**INFORMATORY:**

A bid not seeking a contract. One merely intended to show partner more than average help for whatever he may bid or to disclose where strong opposition to opponents' calls chiefly lies.

**INITIAL:**

The first bid made on a deal. An opening bid.

**LATE:**

One made after having passed on the former bidding rounds. If later than the second round it is an inferential bid.

**LIGHT:**

One made on less than ordinary strength.

**MAJOR:**

A no trump, spade, or heart bid. A game-going bid.

**MINOR:**

A diamond or club bid.

#### **OPENING:**

The dealer's bid or, if he has passed, the first bid made by a subsequent bidder. An initial bid.

#### **ORIGINAL:**

The first bid made by a specific player. Only the first player to bid has the opening bid, but every other bidder has an original bid.

#### **PREEMPTIVE:**

A light no-trump bid to forestall an opponent. An opening bid of more than One or any later unnecessarily high bid. A shut-out bid. Its purpose may be to prevent others from bidding or to convey specific information to partner.

#### **PRIMARY:**

A bid made on the opening round of bids.

#### **PROTECTIVE:**

A defensive bid.

#### **SCORE:**

One made on account of the state of the score. As a safe minor bid made in preference to a less safe major bid, because either will win the game if successful. Or a flag-flying bid to prevent opponents from going out.

#### **SECONDARY:**

One made on the second round of a suit which has not been made on its first.

### SHOWING A LEAD:

A defensive bid which desires no contract but indicates the lead most desired. Often employed against a no-trump bid by the player at his right. An anticipatory or informatory bid.

### SHUT-OUT:

A preemptive bid other than 1-No Trump.

### SPECULATIVE:

A species of desperation bid, hoping to strike partner's best call. Generally occurs when a no-trump bid has been overcalled by an adversary and the partner of the no-trump bidder makes a bid not warranted by his cards.

### SUPPORTING:

An assisting bid.

### TACTICAL:

A bid made for strategic purposes. As when a minor bid is made on a powerful no-trump hand to discover whether any other player will bid its weakest suit before venturing to bid 1-No Trump. Unsafe to attempt this, except on game probabilities, if a hand is very strong in all but one suit, because the bid will stand if this suit is scattered. But it can be done on a long set-up minor suit with a "stopper" in 2 other suits.

### TAKE-OUT:

A defensive or offensive change from partner's call. When a player first bids one suit and then changes it to a new call on a later round, it is called a "shift."

## UNNECESSARILY HIGH:

### A shut-out bid.

There are only 3 distinct varieties of bids: attacking (or business), defensive (or protective), and informatory.

When an attacking bid is made unnecessarily high it is called a shut-out (or preemptive) bid. Such bids must be used with great discretion, and in a way to make their meaning as clear as possible to partner. A forced bid may be either an attacking or a defensive one. The same is true of an inferential bid, and also of a take-out bid.

Supporting (or assisting) bids made at the first opportunity must be regarded as showing the 3-tricks help for partner. Each time a player passes an opportunity to support his partner's bid inferentially deducts 1 probable trick from this 3-tricks help. Very tardy support may show only possible (instead of probable) help, or even a defensive raise which is preferred to permitting opponents to play the hand.

Informatory bids have already been touched upon in the preceding chapters, and will be continued in the following one.

Sizing up a hand and proper bidding are more important than perfect play of the cards; but both are essential to success. A reliable bidding-partner is an invaluable asset.

When considered with opposing bids and the state of the score, expert bidders disclose to each other the character of the hand held, by the number of tricks originally bid, by the shift, by bidding and next pass-

ing, or by passing and then bidding on the next round, by rebidding a suit, by abandoning a suit for partner's, by doubling and redoubling, by silence.

Strong hands desire assistance. Weak hands try to show where and to what extent they can supply it. The object is to determine the call at which 13 cards plus 13 cards, 26 total, are most effective; to push that call to the limit of safety and to abandon it when the team will probably make more (or lose less) by letting opponents secure the contract.

Ninety per cent. of all hands require at least two bids to do this. Consequently any player who shuts out hearing what his partner has to say by making an unwarrantedly high opening bid reveals his ignorance of the fundamental principles of the game, or else his hoggish inclination to play his own call regardless of what the joint cards of his side demand.

## INFORMATORY BIDS

Informatory bids do not seek contracts. They are made in the interest of perfect team-work to disclose two important facts: that probably more than the average 2-tricks assistance can be given on any declaration partner may choose; that 2 or more quick tricks, with other possibilities, are held against opponents' calls and where this strength chiefly lies. This last can be much better shown by bidding a suit headed by A-K than by a weak no-trumper. A bid of 1-Diamond on the hand below will be more specific, and it will average to produce better results than a bid of 1-No Trump, although the hand is J-10 above average. Its irregularity argues long opposing suits, while its very short spades and the low card heading its longest suit will make game impossible unless partner's hand is unusually good. In the latter case either he has a bid or else the other side will encounter too great opposition to score heavily.

Spades, 3; Hearts, Q-J-10; Clubs, 10-8-5-3-2; Diamonds, A-K-J-7.

Owing to its scattered strength, the next hand, which is also J-10 above average, had better be bid 1-No Trump. Its uniformity of suit lengths argues no very long opposing suit, while it is not so important to

secure a lead to any particular suit as it was in the preceding hand.

Spades, J-10-7; Hearts, Q-10-3; Clubs, K-J-8; Diamonds, A-5-3-2.

Ordinarily a bid of One shows "tops." Effective stops to the run of a suit, which at the same time are sufficiently high to probably win tricks, are: A, K-Q, K-J-10, and Q-J-10. The latter two are called "3-honor suits." An effective stop on the first or second round of a suit is called a top—as A, or both K-Q. Tops are, therefore: A-K, A-Q-J, K-Q-J, or if the lower honor be removed from the three combinations last given its place must be supplied by tops of another suit. Three honors which lack the ace, unless containing both king and queen, are generally unsuited to head a short suit bid for information. Such lower 3-honor suits count only on long fighting suits and in emergencies. The following hand is K-J above average, and you would bid 1-No Trump if you dealt, but if the dealer had bid 1-Club you might then bid 1-Diamond as an encouragement to your partner to disclose his best call, although the short diamond suit lacks both ace and queen.

Spades, Q-J-6-3; Hearts, A-K-6; Clubs, 4-2; Diamonds, K-J-10-9.

This is safer and less misinforming than to bid 1-No Trump over a suit bid when you cannot stop that suit. To bid 1-Heart would be more apt to lead your partner to leave you in than to change the call. It is assumed that no player wishes to play a minor suit, provided he can play a major call. With 2 suits, neither of which you really desire to play, make an informatory

bid whenever possible in a minor rather than in a major suit. With above hand you do not fear a club bid going game nor do you expect to go game on your own call. You make an informatory or encouraging bid, to urge partner to disclose any strength he may hold, thus hoping to discover a game call for your side.

There is, however, another method of procedure with this hand which will be set forth under "Forced Bids."

It is difficult at first to grasp all the principles of sound team bidding, but their elements are so vital that they can scarcely be introduced too soon in the study of the game or repeated too often. One bids do not request partner not to make another call, and he is at liberty to assume either that you want to remain in or that you have better than ordinary assistance for another call better suited to his hand. If you cannot properly assist his call you must then overcall him. This makes it incumbent upon each player not to make misleading bids. Hands not worthy of advancing a bid, if unable to give partner more than average assistance of 2 tricks, are generally unworthy of a bid at all. If you bid One on a heart hand able to win only 4 tricks on its own call, but incapable of winning more than 2 tricks on all other calls, you have bid unwisely, and your partner has a right to take you to task for it. But if you bid One on a heart hand able to win only 4 tricks if left in, or 3 tricks on any other possible call, it does not matter whether your partner assumes that you want to be left in and advances your bid or whether he takes you out. He has

no right to criticize your bid. It is true that if he advances your bid on his ability to take 3 tricks at hearts you have jointly contracted to win 8 tricks, whereas there are visible only 7 tricks in the two hands. Nevertheless, the declarer, through his advantageous position of playing both hands, averages to win 1 trick on his play, through finesse, cross-ruff, establishment of a long suit, or other scheme of play. Moreover, it is always better to go down 1 trick than to give opponents an even chance to go game.

It is not justifiable to bid 1-Heart on a hand like this, Hearts, K-Q-X-X-X, without outside tricks, although you can win the odd 11 in 19 times. In 19 average hands you would win 11 times at 8 points per trick, but you would lose 7 times at 50 (or 100 if doubled) points per trick. If the hand were Hearts, A-K-X-X, and an outside A-K, the probable trick-taking value would be about the same; but in the first case you have nothing worth while to assist your partner or to resist an opposing call; in the second case you have something substantial in both those cases. The general strength of the second hand makes it well worth a bid, but the first obligates passing.

Informatory bids show sure stops and "quick tricks" (ace or K-Q). Since a partner cannot at once differentiate between an informative bid and any other bid of One, ordinarily all first-round bids show tops. Long low suits are reserved when possible for second-round bids. Sometimes a forced bid is made on a long suit which lacks both ace and king. But such a hand, if really worth only a single bid, must have ample compensation in quick tricks outside.

There are two species of informatory bids: the original species of purely informatory bids, which merely showed 3 quite certain tricks help for partner and the same if left in; the modern or ordinary informatory bids, which contain 3 or more probable tricks help for partner's call, with better than even chances to win the odd if left in, and 2 quick tricks or more against opponents' declaration.

The three most vital features in all the game are: to go game on your declaration; to save game against opponents' calls; to retain your partner's implicit trust in the soundness of your game. Hence the great importance of sound original bids.

Your partner must never expect to utilize your cards for 3 tricks at his own choice of trumps unless he holds at least 5 trumps, and 6 trumps are better. It is frequently necessary to exhaust opponents of trumps before side strength can be utilized.

Under the chapter "Light No-Trumpers" has been mentioned that the only purely informatory bid now in common use is the "sketchy" no-trumper, although this is the most apt of all to remain undisturbed and the most dangerous to its bidder. The combined chances of shutting out opponents from the bid, and its possible reward, prove irresistible to many players. When no alternative bid can be made the light no-trump bid is to be commended on the same grounds that rational use of all informatory bids is advised.

Figures are dry reading to most people, but you want sound reasons to give your partner for any action which ordinarily would benefit your side if, in a particular case, he blames you because your procedure results in

disaster. The dealer has 44 in 100 chances to make an attacking bid of 1-No Trump, or of Two in any suit make. Each subsequent player has a full even chance to legitimately outbid any call as low as 1-Spade. Thus a dealer who bids 1-Spade has only about 1 in 20 chances that no later player has cards warranting a higher bid. Every encouraging bid you make increases your partner's chances to make safe bids. On account of its small liability to stand, the probabilities show that even a purely informatory bid has, in 100 chances, 66 for good results against 3 for harm, with 31 chances for little or no result either way. A suit bid which helps 22 times as often as it hurts cannot be called either reckless or senseless if it occasionally results badly. Moreover, such results will often be the fault of the bidder's partner, who has neglected to seize his opportunity to do something, or who has tried to read into the bid something which it did not proclaim.

Informatory bids in modern garb are even more safe, and when wisely used give an expert team an enormous advantage over the less proficient.

A player takes his partner out of a minor bid whenever he can reasonably do so, but he does not ordinarily disturb a major call which he can support. This has always made minor informatory bids safer than major ones. Although more than half the time an adversary can safely double a bid made in a very short suit, it is not customary to make such a double for fear the bidder may escape to another call. But good players will not bid strongly against a call unable to win, unless they hold cards which stand good chances to

go game. For these reasons a purely informative bid cannot ordinarily be recommended for major suits nor for regular use in very short minor suits. These precautions are very necessary to take with strange partners and those who are not experts at bidding.

Occasions arise where the logical bid is a weak informative one, even in a major suit. Take a case where your partner deals and bids 1-Club, the next player bidding 1-Heart, when you hold:

Spades, A-K-9-6; Hearts, 8-5-3-2; Clubs, 7;  
Diamonds, A-10-5-4.

With a singleton club you cannot raise your partner's bid. You are unable to bid 2-Diamonds, and it is unsafe to bid 1-No Trump. With a bad score you must bid 1-Spade, hoping that your partner can either support spades, bid no trump, or shift to diamonds.

Ordinary informative bids demand a hand probably good for 4 tricks if left in, thus giving you slightly better than even chances to make the odd. Such a suit bid should be on 4 trumps with tops, or at least A-K-Q if only 3 trumps are held. There should be a reasonably safe 3-tricks help for partner, with added possibilities, or the bid would generally be unwarranted. There should also be at least 2 quick tricks which can probably be made against opponents' calls.

The following suits, even without outside tricks, are now bid informatorially:

A-K-X-X-X; A-Q-J-X-X; A-K-Q-X; A-K-J-10;  
A-Q-J-10. As also are suits next shown when strengthened by a side A or K-Q; K-Q-X-X-X; A-K-X-X;  
A-Q-J-X; K-Q-J-X; A-K-Q. Ordinary card distributions are assumed to exist in the other 3 hands,

so that partner will probably hold at least 2 cards of your 5-card suit, and 3 cards of your 4-card suit. At no trump, or whenever he has powerful trumps, it will be seen that he can probably utilize hands like above for from 3 to 5 tricks. Most of them will yield you at least 4 tricks if you are left in. As against opponent's no-trumpers, they are probably worth from 3 to 5 tricks, and against trump calls at least a probable 2 tricks.

All these combinations meet the requirements of a hand suitable for a free bid of One, which must ordinarily be interpreted as: showing tops in suit bid; probable ability to win the odd if left in; better than average help for any strong call of partner's; at least 2 quick tricks expected against adversaries' declarations.

Any weak hand not fully meeting the above is suited only to raise partner's bid, to pass, or for a secondary bid. A powerful hand has the ability to continue bidding in case its opening bid is obscure. An average hand which fails to meet all requirements of a One bid may still make either a forced or a secondary bid.

## SUPPORTING BIDS

Here, as elsewhere, a player must never lose sight of the average hand. Your partner counts on you for the average 2-tricks help before you bid. You cannot raise his bid at the first opportunity unless you can give him at least 1 more trick than he expects to find. If you have shown him 3-tricks general assistance by an informatory bid, you cannot raise his bid unless your hand is probably worth 4 tricks on his call, or unless your hand has at least 1 quick trick outside the suit you have bid, with reasonable chances to yield over 3 tricks total.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A-10-7-2      | 10-6-4        | A-9-3        | A-8-5           |
| 2. | 9-6-5         | A-J-2         | A-8-4        | 10-6-3-2        |
| 3. | A-8-3         | 7-5-3         | J-10-6       | A-K-10-8        |
| 4. | 10-9-7-4      | A-K-6         | 9-5-3        | 7-4-2           |
| 5. | ————          | 8-4-3         | A-7-6-4-3    | J-8-7-5-2       |
| 6. | J-6-2         | 9-6-2         | 10-8-5       | A-K-Q-X         |

If you bid 1-No Trump on No. 1 above you cannot raise your partner's bid of 2-Hearts, because you have in advance of his bid given all the encouragement your hand warrants. No. 2 does not justify raising your partner's bid of 1-Spade at the first opportunity. Remember this very important rule: each time a

player passes an opportunity to support his partner's bid inferentially deducts 1 probable trick from the standard requirement of 3-tricks help to advance the bid. On the second opportunity to support partner's 1-Spade bid your raise on the 2 quick tricks which No. 2 contains shows to your partner the precise situation. After your bid of 1-Diamond, No. 3 warrants an immediate raise of partner's 1-Heart bid, because the hand has a quick trick outside the suit shown, with possibilities of more than the 3-tricks help indicated by the original 1-Diamond bid. You must not allow him to believe that no strength is held outside the diamond suit. After a bid of 1-Diamond on No. 6 you cannot raise your partner's 1-Heart bid, because your first bid has told the whole story. There is nothing in your hand to prevent opponents winning 6 immediate tricks in spades and clubs. No. 4 warrants a raise at your first opportunity of partner's 1-Spade bid, because you hold 2 quick outside tricks and 4 trumps, which latter average to be worth 1 trick to your partner. No. 5 justifies raising partner's 1-Heart bid, since you can count on 2 spade ruffs and hold 1 quick side trick.

The more closely you follow the rules and probabilities in ordinary cases the higher your scores will average. Under "Valuing Hands" was shown the proper method of calculating the assistance your cards will be to partner. For convenience the principal features of that chapter, which relate particularly to raising partner's bid, are briefly repeated here. On partner's trump calls count as tricks each high trump honor. Estimate mere length of trumps as worth to him: 4 or

5 trumps, 1 trick; 6 or 7 trumps, 2 tricks; 8 trumps, 3 tricks. Holding at least 3 trumps, count 2 tricks for ruffing a void suit, and 1 trick for a singleton in any side suit. With only 2 trumps count 1 trick for a void suit and none for a singleton. In side suits count an ace or a K-Q as a trick; also a guarded king in any unbid suit, or a king of a suit bid at its right on the first round, but it requires K-Q or K-J-10 to be worth a probable trick when held at the bidder's right. Q-J-10 or Q-J-9 count as a probable trick if their possessor has 3 or more trumps, or even 2 trumps, including a high honor.

In general we can say that a hand worth an informatory bid is suitable for a supporting bid. If such a hand falls short of 3 low cards or 2 cards including 1 high honor of partner's suit, an immediate raise of his bid is usually unjustifiable. If, however, a partner bids unnecessarily high on a suit, or if he repeats a suit bid after you pass, he informs you that he wants side help chiefly, and you are justified in raising his bid on side tricks without regard to your trump strength. A hand not worth an informatory bid is generally unworthy of a supporting bid, unless high honors in your partner's suit, length of trumps held, or chances to ruff raise it to the necessary assisting value.

Never change a partner's bid which you can adequately support except for an excellent reason. Even then you must support him unless game is assured on your own bid, if he repeats his call or passes his opportunity to support yours.

Just as the general rule is not to bid no trump over

a suit bid unless you have a probable stop to the suit, so you should ordinarily refrain from supporting your partner's no-trumper over an adverse subsequent suit bid unless you can surely stop that suit. If its only bidder plays before you do, a well-guarded king or an extra-well-guarded queen may answer; but if he plays after you, so that your hand will be led through, a sure stop should ordinarily be held.

If a cautious partner has made his no-trump bid after hearing an adverse suit bid, you must assume that the suit is safely stopped in his hand.

If your partner favors very light no-trump bids and the next player has bid Two in a suit, you must hold both a sure stop to that suit and substantial no-trump support in order to bid 2-No Trumps.

With a partner who never bids light no-trumpers, and under safe conditions of score, a stop to the adverse suit, with a total of 3-tricks assistance, is necessary for a supporting bid at no trumps. Under bad score conditions the certain stop to the adverse suit bid, even if only one other trick is held, is sufficient to warrant an advance. With anything weaker it is best to let the original no-trump bidder decide what he will do.

There are possible exceptions to nearly all rules, but in the long run it does not pay to carry on partner's no-trump bid, no matter how strong your other suits may be, if you lack sure stops to an adverse suit, until after you have again heard from him.

## OPENING ATTACKING BIDS

An opening bid is one made by the dealer or, if he has passed, it is the initial bid made by the first succeeding player who does not pass. It is the first bid made on a deal.

Under "Attacking Hands" was set forth the strength necessary to make an attacking or business bid. The minimum is 4 tricks. Opening bids on 4- or 5-trick hands can never be made solely for attacking purposes, but must always be made, at least in part, for informative or defensive reasons.

A purely attacking bid is made on a hand possessing more than the average strength of 5 tricks on its own call, but not exceeding average help for partner's calls, as 1-Spade bid on the following hand:

Spades, K-Q-10-8-6-4; Hearts, A-7; Clubs, J-5; Diamonds, 9-7-3.

This hand can probably win 2-odd at spades, with average help for partner and other possibilities. Owing to the danger that opponents might remove the heart ace, the only probable re-entry to the hand, it is unwise to assume as probable that the spades could be established on any call of partner. Consequently the bid of 1-Spade must be regarded

as strictly an attacking bid, and the hand has the necessary strength to safely show this by advancing its bid.

If you are forced to bid Two on a 5-trick hand you have 546 chances in 1,000 of success, but winning even 9 points 55 times while losing at least 50 points 45 times is folly. A suit unsafe to rebid is too weak for general use beyond the assistance it contains for partner. Bids of Two on 5-trick hands are justified as original forced bids, as protective bids to avoid greater risks of loss on partner's call, or when the score is bad. Two bids on 5-trick hands are for emergency and not for habitual use.

Two-bids on 6-trick hands have 764 in 1,000 chances to win, and they are entirely justifiable under any score conditions. Eight-trick hands give 886 in 1,000 chances to win 3 odd tricks or more. As you must count on one-third the strength outside your hand as lying with partner, it can readily be seen that without hearing from him you can habitually bid as your safe opening limit: Two on 6-trick or 7-trick hands; Four on 8-trick and 9-trick hands; and Five on 10-trick hands. The advantage of playing two hands is worth considerable, as you know at once what to attempt. But since you ordinarily must estimate your tricks, instead of finding them in a solid suit, you must not add even 1 trick because of your advantageous position. Let the advantage offset your errors in trick-counting and you will come out with a profit in the long run.

The above facts have such important relationship to properly making high opening bids as to deserve a

statement of the mathematical probabilities concerning 7-trick and 8-trick hands.

When your cards are good for

| 7 tricks         |     | your partner can assist with |   | 8 tricks          |     |
|------------------|-----|------------------------------|---|-------------------|-----|
| 71 in 1000 times |     | 0 trick                      |   | 114 in 1000 times |     |
| 262              | " " | 1                            | " | 338               | " " |
| 357              | " " | 2                            | " | 352               | " " |
| 228              | " " | 3                            | " | 162               | " " |
| 71               | " " | 4                            | " | 32                | " " |
| 10               | " " | 5                            | " | 2                 | " " |
| 1                | " " | 6                            | " |                   |     |
| 1000             |     | Total                        |   | 1000              |     |

The 7-trick table shows that habitually playing such hands on opening calls of Three would cause you to go down 2 tricks 71 in 1,000 times, and 1 trick 262 times in such a series. You would make your bid 667 times in 1,000, and you would go game from a love score at spades or hearts 310 times in 1,000. To go down 333 times while you went game 310 times would pay well in actual points won if you were forced to bid Three on such hands in order to be permitted to play them. It is seldom really necessary, and hence detrimental to perfect team-work to bid Three whenever a chance exists that your joint hands may find a better call, or that more revenue may lie in defeating incautious opponents.

Four bids on 8-trick hands have 548 chances to go game at hearts or spades, with 338 chances to go down a single trick, and 114 chances to go down 2 tricks. Bids of One on such powerful hands are best whenever very great outside strength is held, but your partner's chances to have a game hand at such a time are too small to require considering them if your hand can

yield only average or slightly better assistance for his calls.

Always try to improve upon averages by minimizing risks and take your big chances for gain against opponents at times when chances to harm partner are as small as possible. To open with a 4-bid on the first hand below is a far better bid than one on the second hand, although the first is only a 7-trick or perhaps 8-trick hand, while the second is a 9-trick hand.

| <i>Spades</i>      | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Q-J-10-9-7-5-4-3-2 | 8             | 6            | 10-3            |
| A-8                | A-K-Q-10-7-4  | 9-3          | A-K-7           |

The first hand is useless at anything except spades. The second hand can assist partner at anything, while it is practically impossible for adversaries to hold a better hand. The first hand must shut out all adverse weak bids tending to convey information, or adversaries may either discover a game declaration between them, or they may bid up the spade-holder beyond his limit of safety. The second hand is too strong to fear what opponents can do, and if they bid rashly huge penalties may be garnered.

Our knowledge of what an average hand can do, combined with the probabilities on hands above average, give us the basis of a sound practical system for bidding attacking hands.

Always remember that Auction is a game of partners and keep the following facts in mind:

At a love score only about two and one-half per cent. of the hands dealt are evidently game hands with ordinary help from partner, while an additional seven

and one-half per cent. can clearly show holdings on a single bid. The remaining ninety per cent. require at least two bids to assure partner of the best possible call for the joint cards of his side.

Only once in 40 hands has the bidder the right to disregard his partner by deliberately shutting him out of an opportunity to bid. Therefore unnecessarily high bids must only be made to disclose special conditions to partner. A mere belief that your hand can only be profitably played at a specific call is not a sound reason for making a shut-out bid. Your hand must either mean a probable game, or else a high bid must be conventionally made to show specific conditions.

Out of every 33 chances that your partner has to make a business bid, 27 are on 5-trick hands, 5 are on 6-trick hands, and only 1 is on a hand worth 7 tricks on his best call. Consequently you stand small chances of harming your partner when you shut him out on a hand worth a large number of tricks on your best call, but which cannot give other calls more than average assistance.

Bid Four on either major suit and bid Five on a minor suit probably able to go game. Provided in both cases that your general strength is not much in excess of average. Otherwise you must recollect that you have a partner, and that very heavy penalties from doubling opponents are worth more to you than scoring a game.

Strong hands desire information from partner. Weak hands should show where they can help. Consequently the player who opens the bidding has no

excuse for misleading bids and an expert tries to make his initial bid as informative as possible. Regardless of his ability to bid more, he opens with a bid of One whenever his cards do not obligate a higher bid and for specific reasons. Opening bids indicate as follows:

### 1-BIDS:

These show tops. They inform partner where help lies for defense, and assistance for his own calls. They may show all the hand can ever bid, or they may be light opening bids which give no hint of the power behind. They must never deceive partner unless the bidder has compensating tops outside the suit bid, and ample strength to rectify any error into which he may lead partner. You can properly bid 1-Spade on the first hand below to avoid bidding 1-No Trump with the singleton ace of clubs, to find out what will be bid against you before you decide on your final call. If left in, no harm will ordinarily follow. If you attempt such procedure on the second hand below, you have no such strategic reason, and no power to extricate yourself. Therefore that hand must be reserved for a secondary bid.

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Q-10-9-7-4-2  | K-Q-6         | A            | A-Q-9           |
| K-J-8-6-5-3   | 10-5          | A-7-2        | 6-4             |

One-No Trump bids are very indefinite. They neither show the best suit for partner to open defensively, nor do they give any hint as to the bidder's total strength. Light no-trumpers merely show general help.

Light no-trump bids on account of their inscrutable character are most disconcerting to weak adversaries, but they are worth no more than face value in a game between strong teams. They are exceedingly dangerous for weak players to try against better ones. An expert will usually suffer only slight loss against great adverse strength, owing to his cleverness at play. But a weak player drops tricks on nearly every hand. While this is not so noticeable, except to practised eyes, when he plays strong hands, it becomes painfully evident when he attempts to play a sketchy no-trumper. It is axiomatic that poor players are frequently the last to realize their defects. When they commence to awaken their first reform should be to stop bidding against better players any no-trumper which is not at least a king above an average hand.

## 2-BIDS:

These always indicate more than average strength, both in trumps and in tricks. They specifically show spade hands unable to help heart bids, and *vice-versa*. But they still show tops, or they would be reserved for secondary bids. On the first hand below the proper bid is 2-Spades, and on the second hand 2-Hearts.

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A-K-Q-J-6     | —————         | 10-8-4-2     | A-Q-5-3         |
| 10            | K-Q-J-8-7-4   | A-9-6        | J-10-7          |

The only objects of bidding more than One are to show uncommon strength in a suit, so that partner

can assist wholly on side tricks, and to disclose unusual weakness in the other major suit.

Opening bids of Two in either minor suit are reserved to show an established suit good for at least 6 tricks, without a probable card of re-entry. This specific information may prove invaluable to a partner. For example, when partner has only the aces of the other 3 suits, if he has a club he can go up to 3-No Trumps, but without a club to enter dummy he must let his partner's bid stand. To bid 2-Clubs on the hand shown below is to convey accurate information in the only possible way:

Spades, 6-4-3; Hearts, 9-2; Clubs, A-K-Q-J-7-3; Diamonds, 8-5.

This bid of Two should be made on established minor suits worth even 7 or 8 tricks, but never on suits worth only 5 tricks. Care must be used that the suit is really safely established: 6 or 7 to A-K-Q, and 8 or 9 to A-K. On trump calls you can risk 7 to A-K and trust that the opposing cards will fall in 2 leads. This is unsafe to calculate upon when bidding your suit as assistance to partner. In the first instance it will probably cost you only 1 trick if you find it requires 3 rounds to set the suit; in the second instance it may cost you 5 tricks.

Two-No Trump bids can properly be made on a minimum strength of 6 tricks, provided: there is no suit which cannot be speedily stopped if the lead comes up to it, instead of through it.

The bid is made unnecessarily high for 2 reasons: to prevent an exchange of bids between opponents; to disclose to partner the fact that 4 stopped suits

are held. This last reason is sometimes of great importance. The original no-trump bidder at times cannot prudently advance his bid unless his partner can assist him, and this bid enables partner to continue the bidding in a case where he would not dare to do so unless he knew in advance that you held a stop to this adverse suit.

Two-No Trumps cannot prudently be bid if more than a single suit requires a favorable lead to insure stopping it. The bid must not be carelessly used or partner will lose confidence if he finds that its bidder goes down because one suit is unstopped.

### 3-Bids:

Show quite unusual hands. They are too high for ordinary purposes, and too low to show game hands at trumps. Consequently their best use is to show either major or minor suits which can probably yield partner only average help or less for his calls, but which can probably go game if partner can assist them with a little more than average strength.

Thus major hands good for 7 tricks, if undisturbed, or minor hands good for 8 tricks if left in, are suitable for such bids whenever they are not worth more than 2 tricks on other calls. Such bids must not be made on suits worth either more or less on their own calls than given above. Partner then has only to see if he has the needed 3 tricks. By a coincidence the Three bid reminds him that you require 3 tricks assistance to go game from a love score. If used precisely in this way they will occasionally be found

extremely useful, and no other primary or secondary bid can so well express the exact strength held. On either hand given below bid Three.

| <i>Spades</i>    | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i>    | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Q-10-9-8-7-6-3-2 | 2             | 8-5             | A-6             |
| 5-4              | A             | A-J-9-8-7-5-3-2 | 8-4             |

You calculate that 2 rounds of spades will clear the trump suit of the first hand, leaving 6 trump tricks with the outside ace, 7 tricks on a major call. Figuring on equal distribution of clubs in the other hands, it will take only 2 leads to clear trumps in the second hand, giving 7 trumps and the outside ace for tricks, 8 tricks on a minor call. Neither hand is apt to go far wrong, even if partner is very weak, but the chance of setting either suit if partner goes no trump is small, unless partner is so strong that game can be surely won at the suit call. The short suit containing the re-entry ace is apt to be the first one led.

Three-No Trumps for an opening bid can rarely be properly made. It should, in fact, be reserved for an extreme case such as a long-established suit, with a sure stop in each of the other suits—a certain game hand. If a hand contains enough well-distributed tops to go game, without a long-established suit, make an opening bid of 1-No Trump, with an eye to large penalties if adversaries become rash.

#### 4-BIDS:

An opening bid of Four must indicate a hand probably able to go game from a love score with average

help from partner. This means that such a bid cannot ordinarily be made on a hand not probably good for 8 tricks on a major call or 9 tricks on a minor call. Like these:

| <i>Spades</i>  | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i>         | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| K-Q-J-10-7-5-4 | 9             | A-K                  | 9-5-3           |
|                | 5             | A-Q-J-10-9-7-6-4-3-2 | 6-4             |

The first hand above is undoubtedly worth 8 tricks, neither more nor less. As there are only 5 tricks left to be won, it may be regarded as doubtful by some why the bidder should expect his partner to hold more than one-third of them. In reality there are several card combinations which will yield the desired 2 tricks. In the first hand any one of these will answer: 2 of the missing 3 aces; A-K diamonds; A-K hearts; giving the declarer one discard provided diamonds are not first led. K-Q hearts and either the ace of spades or diamonds, still provided diamonds are not first led. K-Q-J diamonds. Any ace and three to the Q clubs, provided the latter suit happens to be opened. A little thought will show numerous other possible cards, such as A-Q hearts or diamonds, which partner can hold and win 2 or 3 tricks, provided a very disadvantageous lead does not come. So while there are only 5 outstanding tricks to hear from, you may be able to win those on any one of a dozen or more combinations which partner may hold.

### 5-Bids:

These are useless to make on a major call unless you can actually count 11 tricks in your own hand. On a

minor call they can be used either to show a sure game from a love score, or that you require only 1 trick from partner to go game. Such hands are very rare, but they occasionally occur.

The dealer and either of the two next players can bid informatively, defensively, or aggressively on opening bid. The player at dealer's right, after 3 players have declined to make an opening bid, cannot properly make any bid except a strong attacking bid. If he has a hand only slightly better than average he had better pass for a new deal. His partner has denied a sound opening bid. As both opponents have done likewise, the fourth player can safely assume that any outstanding long suits are held by one player and their tops by another. If his own suits are very uneven in lengths the same is probably true in other hands; in which case there is apt to await him a series of secondary bids. He has only one partner, but he has two opponents, so these secondary bids are more apt to harm than to benefit him.

An excellent rule to remember is an old Bridge maxim—when ahead be conservative; when behind is the time to venture. If the fourth bidder is well ahead on the score he had better pass unless he has a declaration probably requiring not over 3-tricks assistance to go game. If the score is bad he can venture a hand good for 6 tricks, with perhaps more.

Knowing that the fourth player should not open the bidding on ordinary strength causes some players with the third chance to bid, after two passes, to act as if they were the fourth player. This is incorrect. In general the third player should make an opening bid

just as if he had dealt. The personal bidding characteristics of the fourth player should modify the action of the third player when they are well known. If the fourth player is a free bidder, so that he is quite likely to make a bid after 3 passes, then the third player can well bid on quite a light hand. If, on the contrary, the fourth player invariably passes his opportunity to open the bidding, unless he holds a probable game hand, the third player can pass on anything short of a genuine attacking hand.

A "two-suiter" is a hand containing 2 long suits like these:

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A-K-10-8-6    | K-Q-9-7-4     | 6-3          | J               |
| 2. | —————         | A-Q-J-8-6     | A-K-J-5-2    | 10-7-4          |
| 3. | A-7           | —————         | A-K-Q-6      | J-10-9-7-6-4-2  |
| 4. | Q-8-6-4-2     | J-9-8-5-3     | A-K-Q        | —————           |

If you have a 2-Suiter, like No. 1 or No. 2, wherein the suits are of nearly equal strength, both having tops, you make an opening bid in the higher of the suits. If you are outbid, and your partner has not shown support, you bid Two in the lower. With No. 1 you open with a bid of 1-Spade. If an opponent bids 1-No Trump, or Two in either minor suit, you bid 2-Hearts. This "shift," as it is called, discloses the situation to your partner, and is a request for him to indicate his preference between the 2 suits you have bid. If your last bid comes to him before it has been overbid by an opponent, he can indicate even a slight preference for spades by bidding Two. His bid does not increase your contract. You still have only 2 tricks to make,

but it advises you to carry on the future bidding in spades, instead of in hearts. His pass would indicate that, if he has a preference, it is for hearts.

On No. 3 your opening bid is 1-Club, the lower of your 2 suits, since you have no need to open this hand with a bid on the topless suit. On the next round you can bid 2, 3, or even 4-Diamonds. Since you have first bid the lower suit, it will be apparent to partner that the suits are not equal in all respects, and your style of bidding shows him that the higher cards lie in the club suit.

With No. 4 your opening bid is 1-Club; your secondary bid is 2-Spades, provided some one else does not bid one of your major suits, as is possible. Should some one outbid you with 3-Diamonds you can essay a bid of 3-Hearts if the circumstances appear to warrant it.

Two-suiters are very powerful, but they are fit only for secondary bids, regardless of mere lengths, when both suits lack tops, or ample compensation in a third suit. In the hand below a secondary bid of 2-Spades and a tertiary bid of 3-Hearts, if warranted by the score, to outbid clubs or diamonds, gives partner correct information.

Spades, J-10-9-6-5-2; Hearts, 10-9-8-6-5-3-2;  
Clubs, —; Diamonds, —.

Expert players in general dislike being tied to arbitrary conventions. Popular conventions are such as have properly become a part of the game, because they are really the logical bids or plays to make under given conditions.

Any pair of players, thoroughly acquainted with the

probabilities concerning card distribution, average strength for offense, defense, and assistance to partner, would soon naturally fall into the habit of making the opening bids just set forth. They would soon learn to read each other's opening bids almost as well as if they had seen the cards.

The sole conventionality of the bids here detailed lies in the fact that they must always be used because they are logically sound bids under given conditions.

Stripped of details which can be acquired by degrees, a player can very readily learn to read the chief essentials disclosed by his team-mate's bids as given below. Any errors he may make in reading these bids his partner will try to rectify at the first opportunity.

#### 1-BIDS:

Tops in suit bid. Better than average hand. Better than average help for your own calls. Best suit of your partner's to open against adversaries' calls.

#### 2-BIDS:

Tops in suit bid. More than average strength. If a major bid, shows great weakness in the other major suit. If a minor bid, shows an established suit of at least 6, with no probable re-entry.

#### 3-BIDS:

Show hands needing just 3-tricks assistance to go game from love. Lack of help for other calls.

#### 4-BIDS:

Show hands requiring only average help to go game from love.

#### 5-BIDS:

Show 11 tricks on a major call, or a minor suit needing not over 1 trick to go game from love.

#### 1-NO TRUMP:

General help for your calls.

#### 2-NO TRUMPS:

At least 6 probable tricks, and all suits stopped against leads from the bidder's left.

#### 3-NO TRUMPS:

A sure stop in all suits, with at least one long set-up suit.

## FORCED BIDS

To interpret bids correctly it is necessary to distinguish between free and forced bids. A free bid is one made by the dealer, or by another player when previous players have made no bid. It includes a bid of One over a 1-bid in a lower suit, and also any unnecessarily high bid. Any bid is, in reality, but not necessarily in name, free whenever the only previous bids are lower than the normal bid of the hand in question. An original bid of 2-Hearts on a hand demanding such an opening bid, made over a previous bid of 1-Spade, is not influenced by the spade bid, but it will be viewed as a forced bid by other players. They must judge solely by what they hear bid.

A forced bid is any bid of more than 1 trick made over a previous bid, unless made unnecessarily high. It is then called a "shout," and is recognizable as a free bid. One-Diamond over 1-Club is a free bid, but 2-Diamonds over 1-Heart is called a forced bid, even when bid on 7 to A-K-Q without re-entry, although it would have been bid the same over 1-Club or a pass.

You occasionally hear such a bid as 1-Spade made over a previous bid of 1-Heart referred to as a forced bid. This is inaccurate and misleading. A legitimate

first-round bid shows the proper tops or else the necessary outside quick tricks, whether made by the first bidder or over a previous call. The same standard applies in both cases, as in the hands shown below. One-Spade can be bid on the first and second hands, either as an opening bid or over any previous suit bid of One. The third hand must be reserved for a secondary bid whether the previous player has passed or has bid 1-Heart.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A-K-J-9-3     | 6-4-2         | A-J-7        | 10-5            |
| 2. | K-J-8-7-4-2   | 10-8-5        | K            | A-K-8           |
| 3. | J-10-9-6-5-3  | A-7           | A-10-4       | 9-6             |

The last hand demands quick tricks in partner's hand to make even a low contract. If partner has these the heart-bidder probably cannot go game. While if your partner has cards which may yield you a game it is improbable that he will be unable to bid. In any event you must not deceive him by a first-round bid of 1-Spade, as your compensating cards are too weak to remedy the lack of spade tops.

All free bids had best be made on the system detailed under "Opening Attacking Bids" (except that a stop to an adverse suit which has been bid must be held by a no-trump bidder). If you follow that system your partner can always correctly interpret your shouts. The sole ambiguity in your bids will be when your cards demand only a bid sufficiently high to clear a previous one. Partner cannot then tell whether your normal bid is the one used, or whether you would have made a lower bid as dealer. Unless you advance

such a call, when adversary raises the opposing bid, your partner cannot support you wholly on side strength, but must proceed as detailed under "Supporting Bids."

There are really two distinct bidding methods in vogue in cases where a player has a hand fully warranting an overcall of an adverse bid. To illustrate these we will suppose that you hold a hand which you are willing to bid as high as 3-Hearts if hard pressed by an opponent, but upon which you will bid 2-Hearts if you open the bidding. The dealer bids 1-Spade and your turn comes next. Under the system here recommended you bid 2-Hearts, which you will later advance to 3-Hearts if required. Your partner cannot tell whether your hand would have been bid 1-Heart or 2-Hearts had you dealt, and you must advance your bid to Three before he will dare to support you solely on side strength. This delay is the only disadvantage of this system. Its advantages are: that had your hand demanded a higher opening bid—one of 3, 4, or 5 Hearts—your bid could be as easily read as if you had dealt; no new system for forced bids has to be learned; and you will not so often be defeated merely because you have bid a trick more than the cards really demand.

Under the second system you bid 2-Hearts over 1-Spade only when your opening bid would have been One. You bid 3-Hearts on cards demanding an opening bid of Two. This is very clear, provided your partner can carry in his head this amended bidding system in addition to the one in use for opening bids. Its disadvantages, even then, are: making unneces-

sarily high bids, which entail more set-backs; increased difficulties for partner whenever he must change your bid. The first system, which rectifies its only defect on the next bidding round, is far more easy to remember, safer in practice, and less troublesome when partner must change the call. The first system in the long run results in score gains over the other one.

If you declare no trump when holding cards in only three suits, there are 2 chances that your partner can block the missing suit once to 1 chance that you will lose every trick in that suit. If you have two or three small cards in it, your partner has only about even chances to stop that suit. If you bid over two suits like the latter, he has only about 1 in 4 chances to stop them both.

From these facts are deduced the following rules regarding bidding no trumps: an opening no-trump bid can be made on 3 strong suits, even if the fourth is void; never bid no trumps with 2 strengthless suits before hearing from partner; you can bid no trumps on 2 good and 2 poor suits if your partner has bid one of the latter; do not bid no trumps if an adversary has bid a suit to which you hold no stop.

You often hold an excellent no-trumper concentrated into 3 suits, with the fourth suit unstopped. Formerly if an opponent bid your unstopped suit you had to choose between making a risky no-trump bid, a suit bid which you disliked, and a pass. Mr. W. C. Whitehead was apparently the first to suggest that a conventional double of the suit bid would make the situation perfectly clear to partner. This solution of the

problem works out well, provided it is discreetly used. If you hold the hand below when an adversary has bid 1-Spade you double his bid:

Spades, 5; Hearts, K-Q-J-7; Clubs, A-Q-J-8; Diamonds, A-K-Q-2.

The double is a peremptory demand for partner to bid: 1-No Trump if he holds a safe stop in spades and lacks any long suit; to bid even a worthless 4-card suit if he lacks a spade stop; to bid his long suit in preference to 1-No Trump unless he can stop spades twice; never to let the double stand unless he can defeat the spade bidder. The hand above has excellent support for any call. The risks from such a double are unimportant, but the chances to go game are fair. It is an excellent convention to use whenever you hold 3 powerful suits, probably worth at least 6 tricks on any call partner may make.

To utilize this useful double you must at the same time abandon the old double of a low-suit bid, which was intended to assure partner that you could take care of that suit if he cared to bid. More than one meaning must never be attached to a bid or a double. This double entirely obviates the old excuse that you felt at times obliged to bid no trumps with an adverse suit unstopped, on the chance that your partner could stop it.

You can conventionally double an opening bid of Two if you hold 7 probable tricks for partner's forced responsive bid. With a weaker hand you had better be satisfied to save game. It often happens that your partner's best suit is the one bid by an opponent, without his holding in it a sure stop. It will not pay

to force bids which cannot almost certainly be made, with at least even chances to go game.

If the opening bid is Three you require remarkable side strength to justify forcing partner to bid Four, or even Three. Such side strength can almost certainly win a large penalty against opponents. Consequently a double of Three ordinarily means that you expect to defeat the contract. There are many more cases where you can defeat so high an opening bid, because a part of your strength lies in trumps, than there are cases where your great strength lies wholly in the other suits.

Partner must always use his judgment about bidding on your double of bids of Two and Three. If he holds considerable trump strength and is otherwise very weak he can often let the doubled 2-bid stand for large returns. On rare occasions he can profitably bid a suit over your double of a 3-bid, knowing that you will not double it unless your side strength makes escape to another call almost impossible.

It is quite a common thing to have an adverse no-trump bid before your chance to make that same bid comes. With an established suit it is often best to say nothing, if you can make the opening lead. There was formerly employed what was known as a "sucker" bid, which consisted of bidding an extremely weak suit, with the idea that the no-trump bidder, having that suit well stopped, would continue to a point where he could be doubled and then defeated by leading against him a set-up suit which had not been bid. But such gullibility is no longer expected, and other methods must be employed. There are cases where it pays to

bid 2-No Trumps over One, usually where suits are of about even lengths, but these cases are rare, unless partner has shown some strength by a bid. If partner has not bid, especially if he has passed, a bid of 2-No Trumps over One can properly be made only on a very powerful hand, or on a moderately strong hand when it is preferable to go down rather than to permit adversaries going game and rubber.

On the first appearance of the nebulous no-trumpers Major C. L. Patton devised the counter now in common use—a double of the no-trump bid on a strong no-trump holding in 3 suits, but having one more or less weak suit. This double was a request for partner to bid any 5-card suit he held, or any strong 4-card suit; to bid 2-No Trumps if he held high cards in more than one suit and had no good suit bid, or to remain silent if he held only short, weak suits. As now commonly played this double demands a bid from partner, no matter how weak his hand may be. If the suit bid is made the doubler lets it stand if it is one of his good suits, but he bids 2-No Trumps if it happens, as is frequently the case, to be his weak suit.

Occasionally an adversary bids One, or possibly more, in a suit which you are intending to bid. Even if you can defeat him and there is no chance for him to escape to another call, it is useless to double for the sake of a revenue of less than 300 points if you can go game on a call of your own. You must never double a pleasing call if escape to another is possible. Therefore a double in such a case is almost unknown. The only possible things you can ordinarily do are: to bid higher in the same suit; to bid another suit or no

trumps; to pass. To bid higher on a suit named by an adversary means one of two things: that you hold cards entitling you to make such an opening bid; that you prefer a small loss to having opponents go game. If you have a two-suiter or a no-trumper, you can make another call. In this case it is possible that your opponent may continue his bidding to a point where he can profitably be doubled. If your cards warrant no other bid you must pass, but the chances that your opponent's bid will stand are very slight, since the remaining two players can hold very little strength in the suit.

At times a previous bid discloses the probability that the bidder and yourself divide between you practically all the strong cards, as when the dealer bids 1-Heart with your cards as follows:

Spades, J-10-9-7-6-4-2; Hearts, —; Clubs, A-K-Q; Diamonds, A-K-9.

You have a probable game hand, even if the spade tops are against you, and you hold more than the necessary compensation for their absence. If you wait to make a second-round bid of the spades the dealer's bid will probably stand, and it is unwise to bid Two in either minor suit, since you may be left in. Therefore your proper course is to at once bid spades. Keep the rule given below in mind and follow it, after hearing an adverse bid, just as if your bid opened the contest.

Regardless of great suit strength, it is better to bid One than Two or Three, if you hold also great side strength. Your partner may be hopelessly tied to another very long suit, or your opponents may bid

so high as to give you a heavy score on a double. If you have a game hand, which is powerless to help or resist other calls, your full bid had better be at once made. Hearing from partner is especially desirable where your best suit is a minor one, as he may be able to make a major call. The lessened difficulty of having to win 4 instead of 5 tricks is a great consideration.

Occasions arise where it is unwise to bid even a fairly strong all-around hand against an opposing call which you can resist. To set opponent is usually better than to play your own call for a score falling short of game. You bid against a call which you fear will go game, and you bid when you see game possibilities. The salient points are to go game, to save game, and to set opponents. Holding a hand like either of the following over a no-trump bidder, you must pass, if your partner has done so, or if his turn to bid has not yet arrived.

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| J-10-6-3      | K-2           | 9-4          | A-K-Q-J-6       |
| 8-5-4         | A-K-Q-9-7-3   | —            | 7-5-4-2         |

If the no-trumper is played, you have the lead and can probably save game with either hand. The first hand probably requires 4 or 5 tricks, while the second needs 4 tricks from partner to go game. It will be time enough to bid if either your partner or your other opponent changes the call. Having the lead, never bid an established suit which is unlikely to go game against a no-trumper, when able to defeat it by remaining silent.

You frequently must bid against a no-trump call to

show your partner a lead on hands on which you would pass if you sat in his place. Failure to bid will ordinarily result in another suit being led. It is unlikely that partner can save game without your help, as it is improbable that he also holds a powerful suit against the bidder. If he really does, then your bid may enable your side to go game, although the primary object of your bid is to save game.

It requires a minimum strength of 5 tricks on your own call, and general strength of 3 tricks, to justify showing a lead against a no-trumper. Thus bid 2-Hearts on No. 1 shown below, bid 2-Clubs on No. 2; but bid 3-Spades on No. 3, since you need only 3-tricks help to go game.

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A-7-3         | A-K-9-6-4     | 8-5-2        | J-6             |
| 10-6          | 8-5-3         | K-Q-J-7-4    | K-J-10          |
| A-K-Q-J-9-5-2 | 7-6-4         | 9            | 8-5             |

Hands like the following are quite useless to bid, because you cannot establish them without partner's active co-operation. Such bids often result in his failure to lead a good suit of his own which could save game.

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| J-10-8-7-5-2  | A-6           | J-7          | 10-6-3          |
| <hr/>         | Q-7-5-4-2     | A-8-4-3      | 7-5-4-2         |
| A-Q-6         | 10-8          | 10-7-6-5-4-2 | 9-8             |

Your partner's bid is quite as apt to cause you to make a bid as are opponents'. Your objects are, of

course, to make more or to lose less on your call than on his. The latter class of bids will be found under "Defensive Bids"; the former variety are made from strength and will be found under "Changing Partner's Call." There is also the unnecessary advance of your partner's bid. This last has two species which must be clearly distinguished between in making your bids. The first case is where your assisting strength is so great that you expect game on that call, but not on any other. The second is where no other likely call so well fits the weakness of your hand. Cases where you can assist either his present call or another do not demand an unnecessary raise of his bid.

Whenever your partner's bid reaches you without opposition from opponents at a time when your help is so great as to lead you to expect that a game hand exists on his call, but probably not on a changed bid, it is well to shut out an unheard opponent, and to forestall secondary bids by an immediate raise. To show that your bid is from great assisting strength you raise his bid to the number of tricks he would have originally bid had his hand meant a probable game, as detailed in the following table:

| Partner's Bid   | His Probable Strength in Tricks | Your Minimum Strength in Tricks         |                         |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 in Minor Suit | 4 or 5                          | 6, other possibilities                  | } Raise His Bid to Four |
| 2 " " "         | 6                               | 4, " "                                  |                         |
| 3 " " "         | 8                               | 3, " "                                  |                         |
| 1 in Major Suit | 4 or 5                          | 5, " "                                  | } Raise His Bid to Two  |
| 2 " " "         | 6                               | 4, " "                                  |                         |
| 3 " " "         | 7                               | 3, " "                                  |                         |
| 1 No-trump      | 3 or more                       | 5, perhaps more, sure stop in all suits |                         |

It is unnecessary to raise either a major or a minor bid of Four, as your partner clearly shows his game expectation. It is unwise to thus raise his lower bids on great general strength, as he may prefer a changed call, especially if his bid is a minor one; there is also the possibility of great revenue from doubling an adversary's opposing bid.

It is also unnecessary to raise partner's bid of 2-No Trumps, since he announces that every suit is stopped and that he expects to go game if you possess somewhat better than average help. There is also the chance that opponents may lose heavy penalties if they venture on opposing bids.

Never unnecessarily raise partner's 1-No Trump bid on strong general help of less than 5 tricks, with other possibilities. Even then do not do so unless every suit is stopped in your own hand. The opening lead will go through you, and only A, K-Q, K-J-10, K-J-9-8, Q-J-10, Q-J-9, Q-J-8-7, J-10-9-X can safely be counted as sure stops. It frequently happens that declarer and dummy have a weak suit in common, which may ruin chances to go game, or even result in a defeated contract. Risks must be run only for useful purposes, and then only in proportion to probable gains. The only object in unnecessarily raising partner's bid of 1-No Trump to Two is to forestall opponents' bids and prevent them from showing a suit which otherwise will not be led. The risk is senseless in cases where they cannot go game, unless you can surely block all leads.

Whenever your partner's bid discloses the most likely suit call at which you can give him average assistance,

you unnecessarily raise his bid of One or Two by 1 trick. This is equivalent to telling him: "Partner, I have a poor hand, containing scarcely an honest raise. I give you that now and cannot possibly do any more." On the hand shown below you would raise partner's spade bid on No. 1 and his club bid on No. 2 if the next player to him passes:

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| K-7-4-3       | 9-6-2         | J-7-5        | 10-8-2          |
| 9-5           | 7-4           | 10-9-6-4-3-2 | J-9-4           |

Such additions to partner's bids are species of forced bids, since they are bids which are made owing to his bids, but which would not be made as opening bids.

## CHANGING PARTNER'S CALL

You must pause after hearing your partner's bid, to take in its significance. Then consider whether you have a real reason to advance it or to change it. Under "Forced Bids" were shown reasons for advancing his bid, whether or not an adversary's bid had intervened. Under "Defensive Bids" will be found rules for taking partner out from weakness. You also change his call from strength, regardless of your ability to adequately support him, or of your intention to support his bid if he fails to support yours. The best final call is most accurately determined by each partner's clear exposure of his holdings.

Free and forced bids occur in the case of bidding over partner, just as they do in bidding over an opponent. Take the following hands:

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i>  | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A-K-Q-8-4     | 9-5-2          | A-7          | 10-8-4          |
| 2. | 6             | A-K-Q-9-5      | J-8-3        | 9-7-3-2         |
| 3. | J             | A-Q-J-10-8-6-4 | A-9-6        | 5-4             |
| 4. | 5             | K-Q-J-8-7-5    | 8-5-4        | A-J-6           |
| 5. | 10-9-6        | A-Q-J-10-9-6-4 | Q            | 8-5             |

You bid 1-Spade over partner's 1-Diamond or 1-Club on No. 1 to show him your higher call, to en-

courage him to bid no trump, to allow him a secondary suit bid, to show him where your best defense lies, to intimidate opponents. In short, to fully post him as to your share of joint possibilities, in an attempt to declare and play your total 26 cards to the best possible advantage. If he bids 1-Heart your overcall of 1-Spade is still a free bid, which does not at all deny help for his call, but merely informs him that you have a real 1-Spade bid. If his bid is 1-No Trump your bid of 2-Spades is a forced one, and is therefore ambiguous. In this case it states that you have a sound opening bid of 1-Spade, and consequently regard that call as safer than his no trump.

Two-hearts on hand No. 2 is another ambiguous forced bid over partner's 1-Spade. It does not make clear that you particularly want to play the hand at hearts, as your bid of 3-Hearts on No. 3 over his 1-Spade does. Your 2-Heart bid may mean an original 2-Heart bid, such as you have on hand No. 4, or it may show a hand like No. 5, on which you would open with a bid of 1-Heart, but which warrants a higher bid. In reality the 2-Heart bid on No. 2 is meant to warn him of your shortness in spades.

Partner's free bid over your own merely announces his holding cards worth his bid. Partner's forced bid over your own states that circumstances make him feel it desirable to offer to play the call he announces, and requests that you do not advance your bid unless your suit has both length and strength.

Some players do not bid great suit strength over partner's no trump, on the ground that the hand is too strong. It is unfair to deprive partner of playing

a hand if certain that his results will equal your own, but no-trumpers are uncertain, and a single weak suit may prevent game. It is therefore prudent to make a major call over partner's no-trump bid on cards strongly demanding such a bid, had you dealt. Thus bid 2-Spades on the first hand following as a forced take-out over partner's 1-No Trump bid, or 3-Spades as a free bid under similar circumstances on the second hand.

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| K-Q-J-10-6    | A-Q-9         | 10-8-5-2     | 4               |
| A-Q-J-9-8-5-2 | ————          | A-J-4        | 7-6-3           |

The next hand below has its strength too scattered to be worth an original 1-Heart bid, therefore you cannot bid it from strength over 1-No Trump. But its strength is well distributed to aid partner's no-trumper.

Spades, 8-2; Hearts, K-10-9-6-3; Clubs, A-J-8; Diamonds, K-7-5.

A major call is obviously more likely to go game from love than a minor one. A spade or heart declaration able to go game, or apt to win as many tricks as a no-trumper which cannot go game, is preferable to the no-trumper, because it is safer. At a score when either of two or more calls requires the same number of tricks to go game, such calls are regarded as equals.

Bear in mind these vital conclusions: that partner's no-trump bid over your spade or heart bid specifically denies strength in your suit; partner's spade or heart bid over your no trump seeks greater safety; his diamond or club bid against your major call, unless the

score shows a reason, is a distinct warning for you to abandon your call if you require his help to make your bid. When made to the score a minor take-out of your major call quite likely is done merely for safety with a hand able to go game on the changed call. Any major call over your minor one indicates strength.

Partner's bid against you may be made from strength or because of weakness at your call. It is always to convey information. Partner's bid cannot be from weakness if an intervening bid has come, as his pass over opponent's bid would be sufficient disclosure of lack of support for your call. Unless your hand is sufficiently strong to warrant advancing your own bid, you must assume that his take-out is made to show lack of support. If his bid is overcalled, you had then better help his bid if your cards warrant it. If you are unable to support him, and he cannot advance his own bid he will then advance yours if he is able to do so.

## SECONDARY BIDS

A secondary bid is one made on the second round of bids, either after having passed on the first round or after having made a different primary bid.

The general rule of primary bids to show tops, and secondary bids to show length, is an excellent one. Thus, when a player makes a low bid on the first round, if he passes the opportunity to slightly advance his suit bid on the next round, you infer that his suit is short, with tops. But you credit his suit with both strength and length when he advances his primary bid without waiting to hear from his partner, or if this is done over his partner's bid of something else. In similar fashion you must assume that a secondary bidder's suit lacks tops and proper compensations in quick side tricks.

This method of bidding a long topless suit has superseded former ones which allowed it to be bid on the first round, provided it was very long. The definite information conveyed by this modern method more than offsets an occasional loss incurred through failure to show such a suit at the only possible opportunity.

Secondary bids are powerful weapons if skilfully employed and properly interpreted by partner. Like all bids which are made only high enough to clear ob-

structing bids, on occasions a secondary bid is ambiguous, as illustrated below.

For example, a player with a clear bidding field passes on the first round, but he bids a suit on the next round. It is evident that his suit lacks tops and compensation. But it is not always apparent whether he has a powerful secondary bid or bids defensively. No. 1 below shows a strong hand which must be bid for attack, over partner or opponent. No. 2 is a hand containing a sound 2-Heart bid over partner's 1-No Trump, but it is stretching it to full capacity to bid this hand against opponents if partner has made no bid. No. 3 has a purely defensive bid against partner's call of 1-Spade, but it has not proper strength to overbid an opponent unless partner has already bid something. No. 4 has no possible bid except a warning one of 2-Hearts over partner's 1-No Trump, hoping to lose less on the suit than he probably will at no trumps.

|    | <i>Spades</i>  | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i>  | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Q-10-9-7-6-4-2 | —————         | A-6-3         | J-8-5           |
| 2. | 8-5            | K-Q-9-8-5-2   | 10-7-4        | 9-6             |
| 3. | 3              | 7-6-4         | J-9-8-6-5-3-2 | 7-4             |
| 4. | J-6            | 10-8-7-5-3-2  | 10-6          | 8-5-3           |

It is dangerous to at once definitely assume that one of several possible reasons is the real one. The third bidding round silences players who have bid as a warning of weakness, but those who bid offensively will continue to do so as long as is expedient.

When a player makes different calls for his primary

and secondary bids there is usually little ambiguity as to his holding.

A player's primary suit bid, followed by his suit shift on the second round, clearly shows a two-suiter. If his primary bid is in a lower suit than his secondary bid, it is to show his tops first; otherwise he would bid the higher of his suits first. In the hands below No. 1 would be bid 1-Club, followed by a secondary bid in hearts; No. 2 would be bid 1-Heart, followed by a secondary bid in clubs; while No. 3 would be bid 1-Spade, followed by a heart bid:

|      | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| • 1. | 8-5           | K-J-10-7-4    | A-K-J-9-6    | A               |
| 2.   | K-Q           | K-Q-J-6-3     | Q-J-8-7-5-2  | —               |
| 3.   | A-Q-J-9-2     | A-K-J-8-6     | 4            | 9-6             |

Two-suiters are powerful holdings, but they are unfit for primary bids when both suits are lacking in tops and compensation. No. 1 below is sufficiently compensated to bid 1-Heart as dealer and then to show the spades secondarily, but No. 2 must be reserved for a secondary bid of 2-Spades and a tertiary bid of diamonds.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | J-10-9-6-5-2  | K-J-8-7-3     | A-K          | —               |
| 2. | Q-J-10-8-4-3  | —             | —            | Q-J-9-7-6-4-3   |

If partner had already bid, No. 2 could be bid primarily over his call as a take-out. It would be, moreover, dangerous to wait for a second round, as adversaries might have no bid to make.

A primary bid of 1-No Trump followed by a secondary suit bid indicates doubtful ability to successfully combat opponents' suit at no trumps. It may, however, come from great weakness in another suit which he fears may defeat him if he continues the no trump.

Your partner sometimes opens with a minor suit bid which he changes to no trumps after he hears your bid. This may be due to either of two quite different reasons, although in both cases you bid a suit in which he is short. In one case he opens with 1-Club or 1-Diamond on a very powerful suit, attended by two other short suits having tops. This bid is purely tactical, since he can go game at no trump if you bid his weak suit, but he may even be set if he bids no trump when an adversary holds it. If an adversary bids your partner's weak suit the latter can either continue bidding his opening suit or defeat rash opponents who bid too high against him. In the other case mentioned above your partner bids a suit in preference to 1-No Trump on a much weaker hand than in the first case. If you then bid his weakest suit he only bids 1-No Trump to warn you of that fact, because his suit is too weak to continue bidding it. He deems no trumps more safe than your call unless you are strong enough to outbid his warning no trump.

It is desirable to shut out these illuminating secondary bids whenever your hand warrants such a course. A very high bid which you would unquestionably make as first bidder is still more needed as fourth bidder after 3 players have passed. This latter position is of all places the worst in which to bid a hand only slightly above average. In earlier bids you are forced

to do so for partner's information, and to show your best defensive suit. After all other players have passed your best defense is to do likewise. When a player is taken to task because his weak bid in this position permitted opponents either to go game on a secondary bid or to penalize him because he took a senseless risk, you frequently hear the silly excuse: "Partner, we only needed one trick to go game." Because a single trick will win game is all the stronger reason why opponents will not let the weak bid stand.

Unless circumstances warrant taking an otherwise foolish risk, no hand which needs much above average assistance to go game from love (disregard the fact that there is already a score) should be bid after 3 passes.

Even if you are behind on the score and thus feel warranted in taking risks, the weakest hand fit to bid in this position is one of 6 tricks. Ordinarily 7 probable tricks is as weak as it pays to bid when your pass insures you a new deal and immunity from the chance of deadly secondary bids.

## COMPENSATED SUITS

A compensated suit is one accompanied by sufficient quick outside tricks to amend its own lack of proper primary bidding tops.

For convenience are repeated below the card combinations suitable for informatory primary bids: A-K-X-X-X; A-Q-J-X-X; A-K-Q-X; A-K-J-10; A-Q-J-10; even without an outside trick. Also the following if accompanied by a quick side trick: K-Q-X-X-X; A-K-X-X; A-Q-J-X; K-Q-J-X; A-K-Q. This last suit is too short to be bid except for purely informatory purposes unless supported by an outside trick. More detailed information concerning such suits was given under "Informatory Bids." Such combinations, unless more strongly supported than noted above, are not bid in expectation of obtaining a contract, but only to show help for partner's calls, and to show defensive leads.

Compensated suits must always be bid with the idea that you will be left in. You do not want this to happen if it is possible to find a better call for your joint 26 cards. The majority of players have very little knowledge as to what constitutes proper compensation to entitle a topless suit to a primary attacking bid. Yet this is an extremely important subject.

Ordinarily a topless suit, no matter how long it may be, must be reserved for a secondary bid, or a take-out of partner's bid. With a two-suiter consisting of a long, topless major suit and a minor suit having tops, you ordinarily bid the lower suit primarily, and reserve the higher suit for a secondary bid.

Two cases are found where compensated suits must be primarily bid. The first case is that of a topless suit accompanied by so many outside quick tricks that the deal will probably be abandoned unless you make a bid, and you bid your most powerful suit because you fear to be left in if you first make a weaker and more conventional opening bid. The second case is where a previous player has bid and you infer that his quick tricks added to your own are not apt to leave the other players a primary bid.

To accurately determine when a topless suit is proper to be bid primarily, we must resort to the dry subject of mathematical probabilities. Six tricks are usually won by trumps, and only 7 tricks are ordinarily taken by the 3 outside suits. The quick tricks recognizable by 4 players who examine only their own hands average to be 6, or an average of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  quick tricks to a suit—all are aces, or kings combined with their aces or queens. It is unsafe to calculate that A-K-Q is worth 3 quick tricks, since precisely even chances exist whether a suit of 3 cards can or cannot be ruffed on the third round. There can be visible as many as 8 quick tricks or as few as 4, depending on the number of kings falling in the same hand with their aces or queens. A-Q-J count as 2 probable tricks, for declarer's side in particular, but they must not be re-

garded as 2 quick tricks. Restrict the use of this term to cases where only a ruff can prevent card combinations from winning. Tenaces are too uncertain to be called quick tricks.

If your hand contains 3 of these 6 quick tricks, they must be divided among either 2 or 3 suits. The probable remaining 3 quick tricks may be distributed in any manner among the other 3 players. The probabilities are: in 100 chances, 24 that they are distributed 1 to each player, 67 that one player holds 2 tricks, and 9 that one player has all 3 of them. Only 24 times in 100 are all the remaining players without a sound primary bid, because each holds only 1 quick trick. But 76 times in 100 you will find another player holding 2 or 3 quick tricks, and usually having a sound primary bid. Therefore you can safely calculate upon a primary bid being made by another player when your hand contains not over 3 quick tricks, whether you pass, or make a minor call to show your tops, with the intention of utilizing a long topless suit for a secondary bid.

It is quite another matter when you hold 4 quick tricks, because the chances that another player can make a sound primary bid are to the chances that the deal will pass unless you bid as 31 is to 69.

A player cannot make an opening bid on a topless suit accompanied by only 3 quick side tricks merely on the flimsy excuse that he has so much side stuff that the deal will otherwise pass. Under such circumstances 3 out of 4 times, on an average, another player can properly make a bid. On the contrary, a player must bid a very long topless suit if it is sup-

ported by 4 quick tricks, because on an average of 7 in 10 times the deal will otherwise be passed.

On the hands shown below you had best make your bids as follows:

No. 1. Make an opening bid of 1-Club on this hand. It is too unbalanced to make a good no-trumper, and you do not hold sufficient tops to fear that no opposing bid will be made. If deemed wise you can show the heart suit by a secondary bid. If some one else deal and bid 1-Diamond, you can then bid 1-Heart on the first round.

No. 2. This is an ordinary two-suiter which must be opened with a primary bid of 1-Spade, followed by a secondary diamond bid, if an opposing bid does not find your partner supporting your first bid.

No. 3. As dealer you may pass on this unbalanced hand and trust to a secondary bid to show your spades. They drop too rapidly from king to 6 to make a good trump suit. As second bidder you can immediately bid 1-Spade over 1-Heart or 1-Diamond.

No. 4. Bid 1-Spade as dealer or first bidder.

No. 5. This is so heavily compensated as to demand a primary bid of 1-Heart.

No. 6. You must bid 1-Spade on this hand as the remaining players have poor chances to have a legitimate opening bid.

No. 7. As dealer bid 1-Heart on this hand.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A             | Q-9-8-6-2     | A-K-9-6      | 7-5-4           |
| 2. | K-Q-7-5-3     | A-7           | 8            | A-Q-10-6-4      |
| 3. | K-6-5-4-2     | A             | A-K-8        | 7-5-3-2         |
| 4. | K-J-9-8-5     | 8-4           | A-9-7        | A-K-10          |
| 5. | A             | Q-J-6-5-3     | A-K-6-3      | K-Q-J           |
| 6. | 10-9-7-6-5-3  | A-K           | K-6          | A-K-10          |
| 7. | A-K-4         | J-10-9-7-6-3  | K-Q-8        | 6               |

If a previous player makes the opening bid, at a time when you hold 3 quick tricks, you must realize that his bid will probably stand unless you change it, because you and this bidder hold so many quick tricks that neither of the remaining players is apt to have a sound primary bid in his hand. If you pass, the bidder's partner may make a defensive take-out, or your partner may possibly make a desperation bid, but more than even chances exist that you will have no opportunity to make a secondary bid. If your long suit lacks the 3 top honors it may be safest to make a minor bid over his minor bid, provided you have a good one to make. Under other circumstances you may feel obliged to bid a topless suit, provided it is probably good for at least 3 tricks as trump.

On the hands shown below bid as follows:

1. Bid 1-Diamond over a previous 1-Club bid, instead of at once bidding 1-Heart. This makes your holding clearer to partner.
2. Bid 1-Spade over opponent's 1-Heart call.
3. Either 1-Heart or 1-Club can very properly be bid on this hand.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | A-6           | J-10-7-5-4-2  | —————        | A-K-J-8-6       |
| 2. | 10-9-8-6-4-3  | A-8           | A-K          | 7-5-4           |
| 3. | A-7           | K-10-9-6-3    | A-K-J-10-3   | Q               |

The great advantage of bidding a suit having tops is that your partner opens that suit against an opposing call, and you often save game before the declarer can prevent ruffs or discard in ways to kill your suit. A trick or two is so frequently lost by partner's failure

to open your best defensive suit that it requires at least 1 trick compensation to bid a topless suit in place of bidding an equally long suit with tops. To bid on a suit like this, A-K-10-6-3, without a side trick, frequently results in your winning 3 immediate tricks against opponents; 2 tricks with ace and king, with a third trick by partner's ruff. Or by partner's jack coming through dummy's three to a queen and picking it up. A suit A-10-9-6-3, with a side ace, considered in all possible ways, is not as good as the suit shown above. Nor is K-8-6-5-2, with a side A-K, the full equivalent of K-Q-8-6-5 with a side ace. In fact, it ordinarily requires 2 quick side tricks to fully compensate for the absence of the usual second quick trick in a bidden suit, and 3 quick tricks to atone for inability to take even a single quick trick in that suit.

Few players fully realize that an opponent may be able to draw 2 trumps out of your topless suit for every one you can make him play. Take the following hand, for example:

Spades, J-10-9-6-5-4; Hearts, A-K-6; Clubs, A-K-10; Diamonds, 8.

An opponent with 4 trumps and all your high spade honors can by means of a long, established diamond suit make you use 2 trumps—one to ruff and the other to lead in an attempt to pull his trumps—for each trump he is forced to play. This will result in leaving him with the long trump and the remainder of his diamond suit to run off. You may be able to win only 4 tricks against him; yet the illustrative hand averages to be worth 7 tricks. Although we bid on probabili-

ties, not on possibilities, it shows how dangerous the lack of top trumps may prove to be.

To make perfectly clear what is to follow concerning bids on compensated suits, the probabilities given below must be understood. A 5-card suit consisting of the lowest possible ones, 6-5-4-3-2, will average to win 2 tricks 32 times in 100, and 1 trick 81 in 100 times. If, instead of being the lowest possible 5 cards, they come at random from 2 up to the jack, but not higher, 54 times out of 100 you will win two tricks with them, either because neither adversary holds more than three trumps or because his last trump is outranked by yours.

A sound trump call means probable ability to win at least 3 trump tricks. A 5-card suit headed by ace, king, or queen meets this requirement, provided that you also hold either the jack or 10-9. A 6-card trump suit will average to win 3 tricks even if it consists of the six lowest cards. No suit below these minima set for 5-card and 6-card suits can be utilized for trump calls, and only under proper conditions can such suits be bid at all.

Five to Q-10-9 or six cards to jack ordinarily require 3 quick side tricks to make the suit worth bidding. Even then it may often be better to utilize them for a secondary bid if another suit is available for a more conventional primary bid. Such compensated suits can always be bid over a previous bid by opponents. In desperate situations bids can be risked on these suits with only 2 quick side tricks.

Since it is as unfair to partner to fail to disclose unusual strength as it is to bid without reason, it follows that a compensated suit makes an opening bid

obligatory when you can count in your hand 7 probable tricks, with at least 3 tricks in your long suit. Whether you had better primarily bid another suit, no trump, or your long compensated suit, must depend upon the composition of your hand. Six probable tricks give excellent grounds for a bid, but 7 probable tricks demand one. If another player bids before you do, it may happen that he bids a suit wherein you are so strong that you pass the first round, and govern your later actions by what follows.

## DEFENSIVE BIDS

A defensive or protective bid is one made to save points. Its bidder does not necessarily desire a contract, but he bids to enlighten partner; to bluff an adversary into an overbid; to show partner the best lead to defeat opponents or to save game; to suffer a small loss as declarer in preference to allowing adversaries to win the game; to try and strike a call which partner can support.

Defensive bidding is an extremely important branch of the game, and one which enables experts to minimize the value of stronger hands if held by weaker opponents. The majority of players are so anxious to bid and so loath to stop, that much useful information can be conveyed to partner by bidding hands which probably cannot fulfil their contracts if left in. Gauging correctly the amount of bluff and overbid which a particular opposing pair will stand is very necessary, or their doubles of your over-high bids may result in disaster to you. Bluff or boosting bids against reckless bidders can sometimes be carried to a point where opponents cannot make their contracts. But a team of sound bidders can so rarely be bluffed into an overbid to exceed 1 trick, and the booster is

so frequently doubled, that his tactics are losing ones unless employed against players of his own caliber.

Flag-flying, or overbidding to deliberately suffer a loss in preference to permitting opponents to go game, is another feature of defensive tactics which requires sound judgment to make pay. You can always afford to suffer a loss not exceeding 150 points rather than allow opponents to go game. Setting opponents for even 100 points averages to be worth more to you than playing a hand which fails to go game. If a choice lies between playing a hand which probably cannot go game and letting opponents play a similar hand, you had better do so if sure of a small score, but not certain to set them, and you had better let them do it if you are not certain of making your contract, or if you believe that they cannot make theirs. The amount you can venture to overbid your hand very largely depends upon who your opponents are. If they are very slow to double, you can venture to overbid a possible 3 tricks to save game, but the extreme limit must be 2 tricks against players who are quick to double any such desperation bids.

A speculative bid is an overbid of the cards held, trusting that partner can sufficiently support the call to avert disaster. This is a species of desperation bid which is most commonly employed in two situations. The first of these is when a previous player makes a shut-out bid at a time when you hold strong cards which require more than average help to fulfil your contract if you outbid him. The second case is when an opponent has outbid your partner, and you read in your partner's bid more help than it averages to afford

the call which you make. This is most frequently done when partner has bid no trump, which announces general assistance. The speculative bid aims to strike a strong suit in his hand. Partner's free bid usually indicates 3 probable tricks on your calls, and your bid becomes speculative if you gamble upon finding over that number. How many tricks you can properly gamble is regulated by the same rules which govern all flag-flying: the reliability of the preceding bids, the chances that opponents can go game, your chances of defeating their contract, the ability of your contract to go game if it succeeds, and the likelihood that opponents will double you or that they can be boosted beyond their limit of safety.

Anticipatory, showing-a-lead, and informatory bids are nearly synonymous terms which are used by different circles of players. These were discussed under "Informatory Bids."

All the foregoing varieties of bid having more or less of a defensive character have already been taken up in earlier chapters. Under "Changing Partner's Call" rules were given for making strong take-out bids over partner's calls. To obviate the necessity of turning back to that chapter a brief summary is given below of the most common rules governing strong take-out bids.

If your partner bids 1-Spade, and your bidding turn comes with a hand unable to assist him to the extent of two tricks, a take-out bid of Two should be made in a lower suit if your hand is worth 5 sure tricks at hearts, diamonds, or clubs. The same is true even if you can assist your partner to the extent of the usual

two probable tricks, but hold only a singleton of his suit or none. In this case it is likely that one opponent holds as many as your partner of his suit. If he is especially strong he can bid Two over your warning bid.

Take-out bids show partner the true situation, since you will not bid this way on a lower suit than he has unless you can probably make your contract, but cannot help his contract by 2 tricks, or unless you are very short in his suit, so that your bid is apt to turn out better than his bid. You bid Three or Four over his higher suit to disclose a hand worth such an opening bid.

If short in your partner's suit but strong in the other three suits, you can bid 1-No Trump when lacking a safer suit bid.

With your strength massed in a single suit which has over 5 cards you can bid Three instead of Two (on ability to win 6 tricks) over your partner's no trump, especially when you hold 4 heart or spade honors, and consequently desire the high honor score. Unless your partner holds "100 aces" he should never disregard your take-out bid of Three. At love score you should be able to win 8 tricks to make properly such a bid for club or diamond honor score.

There remains only the purely protective bid; a suit bid over partner's call, at a time when the intervening player has passed, with no prospect of fulfilling your contract, but merely in an attempt to lose less than partner's call will probably lose. Such a protective bid may be justified either because a player cannot assist his partner to the extent of the usual 2 tricks,

or because he has fewer of his partner's suit than the expected 2 or 3 cards, or because of both shortages. He is then weak at partner's call. Unless he has a strong call of his own he must see if he can legitimately make a protective bid.

Partner's trump call probably makes his cards worth 2 tricks more than on your changed call. If your cards are worth 3 tricks more on a higher suit call than on his, or 4 tricks more on a lower suit call, you must bid, when you cannot properly support him.

Your weakness and opponent's passing your partner's call make it appear likely that your partner's hand is above the average strength expected from his call. It is possible that this pass shows satisfaction at partner's bid. But the results, if you bid on cards weaker than those indorsed above, are too problematical to warrant you in doing so.

Suppose that you hold the hands given below, at times when your partner has bid 1-Heart and the next player has passed. What must you do in each case?

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Q-J-8-7-3-2   | 8-6-4         | A-K-9        | 10              |
| 2. | J-9-8-6-5-4   | ————          | 10-7-4       | A-K-8-6         |
| 3. | 10-7          | 10-7-5-2      | Q-J-9-8-6-3  | J               |
| 4. | J-10-5-3      | ————          | 7-4          | J-9-8-7-5-3-2   |
| 5. | 8-6-4         | 6             | J-9-8-7-5-3  | 10-9-4          |
| 6. | J-9-8-7-5-3   | 6             | 8-6-4        | 10-9-4          |

Reserve No. 1 for a secondary bid of spades. Your hand has both average trump length and 2 quick tricks at partner's call. It is not sufficiently compensated to warrant a primary bid of spades, and no

protective bid is necessary. Bid 1-Spade on No. 2 as a warning that you lack average length in his suit. You must pass with No. 3 since 4 of his suit are apt to save him a trick, and you can ruff diamonds, also spades if partner has more than two of them. No. 4 demands a take-out bid of 2-Diamonds. The hand is worth 4 or 5 more tricks at that call than at hearts, and it has neither side tricks nor hearts to help partner. No. 5 had better be passed, as the results of your bidding 2-Clubs are very uncertain. No. 6 must be risked at a bid of 1-Spade. The difference between venturing a bid of One on this hand and Two on the previous hand makes it worth while to bid the spades.

Since the advent of informatory no-trump bids, many writers and players have advocated various schemes of bid and take-out, as set forth under "Light No-Trumpers." The futility of some of these is also shown in that chapter. Strong take-outs of partner's no-trump bids must be made on all hands worth an original major suit bid. Also on all except hopelessly weak two-suiters, if one of these long suits is either spades or hearts. Last of all upon a fairly strong major suit of 5 or more cards whenever another suit is void or contains a low singleton. The irregularity of your suit lengths usually presages dangerous suits in adversaries' hands. Bid Two on the following hands over partner's 1-No Trump call:

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A-K-J-9-5     | Q-6           | 9-8-4        | 10-7-3          |
| 10-8          | A-J-9-7-2     | A-K-6        | 9-6-4           |
| K-J-6-5-3     | 8-4           | J            | A-K-10-8-5      |
| J-9-7-4       | Q-10-9-6-5    | 8-7-4-3      | ————            |

The difficulty of going game from love with a strong minor bid usually makes it inadvisable to take partner out of his no-trump bid with a minor call worth less than an opening bid of Three. Special conditions sometimes make desirable a minor take-out from strength. This should be done at any time when the score is sufficiently high to probably enable game to be won at diamonds or clubs. At a score of 18 the first hand below should be bid 2-Clubs over partner's 1-No Trump. At love score the second hand should not attempt the take-out, since its strength can be so well utilized at no trumps. The third hand had better bid 2-Diamonds, at any score, followed by a bid of 3-Clubs if partner returns to his no-trumper.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | 10-7          | 8-5-3         | K-Q-J-9-6-4  | 7-2             |
| 2. | 9-4           | K-10          | A-K-Q-8-5-3  | J-10-8          |
| 3. | 5             | —             | K-J-10-9-6-4 | A-K-J-10-7-5    |

In general, strong major suits urge take-outs, while similar minor suits must be counted as no-trump help. Spades and hearts are safer than no-trump calls, and strong major suits can about as readily go game. The difficulty of winning 5-odd with diamonds or clubs as trumps counterbalances the greater risk of the no-trumper.

The weakest no-trumper which will pay to habitually bid is a hand a queen above average, with the strength well distributed over at least 3 suits. The weakest take-out which will in the long run win for your side more than it loses is on a topless 6-card major suit, with or without side tricks, or a topless 6-card minor

suit, especially one lacking average side tricks. If the long topless minor suit has more than average strength in side tricks, in other words, if the long minor suit is fully compensated by quick side tricks, it will average to pay better not to disturb partner's no-trump bid. Overbid partner's 1-No Trump with hands No. 1 and No. 2 shown below, but pass when holding No. 3 and No. 4.

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | 10-4          | 9-6-5         | Q-10-8-7-4-3 | K-7             |
| 2. | Q-8           | A-Q-3         | J-9-8-6-5-2  | 8-6             |
| 3. | 9-6-5         | A-10          | J-9-8-6-5-2  | A-K             |
| 4. | A-K           | K-Q-4         | 10-8-7-5-4-3 | 10-5            |

Considerable factors in the strength and safety of the no-trump bidder lie in the opening lead coming up to him, instead of through his hand, and in his weaknesses being concealed. On this account dummy is ordinarily worth at least a trick less on partner's suit call than was anticipated when its holder bid no trump. To offset this is the greater average safety of a trump call. An established adverse suit cannot be run to its end against a suit call, as it can at no trumps, so long as trumps last. If you have a suit which is probably worth 2 more tricks as trumps than if played at your partner's no-trump call, your take-out necessitates winning an extra trick, and his cards are probably worth at least 1 trick less on your call than at his. Therefore your only gain lies in added safety. On the other hand, it requires an additional trick to go game from love with a major suit, and 2 additional tricks to go game with a minor suit. Weak take-outs gain only

in safety, as they are intended to do. Strong major-suit take-outs add to this reasonable game prospects, and they are accordingly both safe and sound. Strong minor suits can so seldom go game from love, and they can so well support partner's no-trumper, that they cannot profitably be utilized as take-outs except to the score, or where they are part of an unusually strong minor two-suiter.

Under "Compensated Suits" was shown that a 5-card suit, running naturally from jack down to deuce, has 54 in 100 chances to win 2 tricks as trumps. A sound trump call demands a suit able to win 3 tricks, and a 5-card suit headed by ace, king, or queen meets this requirement, provided that it contains also the jack or 10-9. Any 6-card suit will average to win 3 tricks.

We can sum up the average results of a 5-card take-out from weakness as follows: a suit headed by a card lower than jack, or one headed by jack in which most of the cards run very low, will be set back more often than the no-trumper; if headed by jack, and thence dropping gradually to the deuce, the take-out and the no-trumper will suffer about the same number of defeats; if headed by either A, K, or Q, together with the jack or 10-9, the set-backs for the take-out will be fewer than for the no-trumper. All take-outs from weakness with 5-card suits average to reduce the number of tricks the declaration can be set. On the other hand, the no-trumper will win more games, and hence will yield larger average scores than the weak take-outs, because the former will have more 250 honor points for rubbers to its credit.

The practical application of these probabilities to his own case requires a player to really know his own capabilities and limitations, more especially the latter. Strong teams will benefit in the long run by avoiding 5-card take-outs from weakness. If an acute player bids 1-No Trump you had better refrain from the weak take-out on five of a suit, but if your partner is a less sharp player, or if he is a stranger, it may be safer to make this weak take-out. But for harmony's sake make this take-out without protest for any partner who has requested it.

## PASSING

Sound passes are as important a part of the game as sound bids, and on your correct interpretation of a player's reasons for passing may depend your gain or loss on that hand. A partner who passes when he should bid is about as distressing a mate as one who bids at all times. Bids are necessary to win games and rubbers. Players who bid only on game hands, or who hold back to see what other players will do, are permitting opponents to score unwarrantedly.

It is a duty to take your partner out of a losing make only when it can be done to advantage. It is best to leave an opponent in a cheap make, incapable of going game, whether he will win or lose, unless the advantage to you is clear in making a bid. Your opponents may have expected you to bid, and are lying low with big hands, ready to double you or to go no trump when you bid. If you refuse to bid and let them play the deal it will usually be best for you. It is, however, your duty to make every possible sound bid unless a weightier reason for passing exists.

Partner's "No Bid" as dealer denies having a sound opening bid. His "Pass" after an opponent's opening bid admits lack of suitable primary bid to overcall opponent. If opponent's bid is higher than 1-Club

your partner may have a sound bid of One, but still be unable to bid Two in a lower suit than opponent has named. Partner may have an opening no-trump bid, without opponent's suit stopped, but lacking a good suit bid, or cards warranting a conventional double to disclose the situation, he is forced to pass. Having great strength at opponent's trump call justifies passing, provided no suitable overcall can be made. Opponent's call is so unlikely to remain undisturbed by his partner or by you that your partner is unjustified in passing a favorable opportunity to make a bid merely because he likes opponent's call. Partner's failure to overcall opponent's no trump may come from inability to do so, or because he can surely save game, possibly because he can defeat the no-trumper without having a probable game-going declaration of his own.

Partner's failure to support your call tells you one of two things: that he is powerless to properly assist you, or that he can defeat opponent's call and fears that they will shift if he either assists or doubles. Partner should hold a probable 3 tricks to assist you at the first opportunity, but each time you repeat your bid over his pass deducts 1 trick from that requirement. If you have twice rebid your suit over partner's passes he can raise your bid the third round on a single quick trick, with added possibilities. Therefore partner's continued refusal to raise your bid is a distinct warning for you not to overbid your hand. Partner's failure to support your no-trump bid which an opponent has overcalled shows a double lack: first of a sure stop to opponent's suit with outside help for your no-

trumper; second, a sound bid of his own. He may have excellent assistance for you which he will disclose on the next round if you rebid or if you shift to a suit bid. All possible causes for partner's acts must be recognized without assuming that a particular one is the real cause until further bidding makes his reason more clear.

The original no-trump bidder can continue with an adverse suit stopped once, or if he has a "near stop," if his hand warrants such a course. Absolute stops are, A, K-Q, K-J-10, Q-J-10, and near stops are K-J-9, K-J-8-7, Q-J-9, Q-J-8-7, K-10-9-7. The original no-trump bidder's partner cannot tell whether a particular no-trumper is strong or weak, so in addition to a single stop to a dangerous call he usually requires at least 2 outside tricks to advance partner's no-trump bid. If the adverse bid is a minor one, or even if it is a major call with opponents at love score, a sure stop and 3 safe outside tricks are none too much to continue partner's bid. A near stop held at opponent's left can be utilized as if it were a sure stop, but if held at opponent's right, so that the opening lead will go through it, the near stop demands an added side trick to make a sound assisting bid if partner has passed.

A risk should always be compensated by a hope of extra gain. This small risk of a probable stop instead of a sure one is worth an added trick, unless the score is bad. A larger risk demands still greater chances of gain. This rule of taking risks proportionate to possible gains is important to remember in various situations arising during the course of a game, such

as risking a deep finesse to win the rubber, or losing a trick on an even chance to win two later on.

It is unjustifiable to take even a slight risk to prevent opponents from winning a contract which is incapable of going game. You have nearly as good chances to win the game from love as they have from 28. Never take even a slight uncompensated risk in such a situation. Pass and see what partner will do. Except in cases of real emergency it is proper to let the original bidder assume the risks, and for his partner to stick to the rules prescribed for raising bids. It will not do for each player to overbid his hand a trick or two just to prevent opponents from obtaining a risky contract.

Intermediate scores have some value, as sometimes two successive small scores go game. Moreover, it is much easier to win 3-odd than 4-odd, and still easier to win 2-odd. To that extent you must keep track of the score to see whether you had better pass an adverse bid which you feel cannot win many tricks. If opponents need only 2- or 3-odd to go game you must sometimes take risks which a clean score would make unjustifiable.

## DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

Just as with bids, doubles and redoubles may be either informatory or they may mean business. But those made for information no longer include a double of a low bid of any suit to invite partner's no-trump bid by showing stops to the opposing suit. There are now four distinct varieties of doubles:

1. The Patton double of no-trump bids.
2. The Whitehead double of trump bids.
3. The business double when able to defeat a business bid.
4. The bluff double merely intended to frighten the bidder into a less dreaded call.

There is a species of redouble to correspond with each of these doubles. Redoubles are used to combat the troublesome Patton and Whitehead doubles. The business redouble is used where the bidder believes that he can make his doubled contract. The bluff redouble is sometimes the only possible escape from serious loss. This redouble may frighten the doubler or his partner into a bid, either because they can go game or because one opponent has so little of value against the doubled call that he fears to trust his partner's judgment when you redouble.

The bluff double, like bidding a suit in which you

hold nothing, may occasionally fool even a good player, but it is so seldom effective against a sound bidder that it is almost a thing of the past. Players no longer take a partner out of a double unless they have the strength to do so with comparative safety.

It is safer to double or redouble a player who sits on your right than one sitting over you at your left.

Do not double or redouble, even on a certainty, when there is a probable loophole for escape into another call less favorable to you.

On the rubber game, in particular, doubling and redoubling, except on certainties, should be made to score.

A "free double" is when the bidder will win game on the undoubled contract. Somewhat greater liberties can be taken on a double under such conditions. But you must never double merely on that account. Do not take your partner out of a double unless you either would or could have done so had he not been doubled.

If your partner's bids and the cards you hold show that escape to a call less favorable to you is practically impossible, there are two things still to consider before doubling:

1. Whether you can surely defeat the contract.
2. If you can set the bidder back, will it pay you better than the best declaration open to you?

A double discloses where strength lies, and reduces the doubler's winning chances by an average of about one trick, by causing leads through his hand to be made.

If the declarer's partner has not bid, more especially if he has passed, a doubler sitting over the declarer can more freely count kings as tricks, trump tenaces as worth two tricks, medium-sized trumps as worth tricks, and so on. If the doubler sits at declarer's right, or if both opponents have bid, tricks must be counted in a very conservative manner. The former situation gives a favorable doubling position, the latter gives an unfavorable doubling position.

In a favorable doubling position it is sufficient to hold enough reasonably sure tricks to win all outside of what the contract calls for, thus depending upon your partner for a single trick if you have not heard from him. If your partner has given a bid showing three tricks, you can count two of them. It is dangerous to count three of them unless you play both hands. If the bidding contest between your hand and the declarer's has been very keen, and your partner has steadily passed, you cannot count on him for even a single trick.

In an unfavorable doubling position at least one more trick than given above should be held by the doubler. Both because of the conventional use of the double of 1-No Trump, and because escape is easy, a player must never double 1-No Trump on an established suit which can defeat the bid. Similarly with a suit bid of One, never double because you can defeat it.

In most cases there is little in doubles of 2-bids. Three-bids are sufficiently high, if made in major suits, to cut off safe-escape, and are hard to win.

Doubles of high trump bids, which have risen step by step, both partners bidding, can be doubled largely

on side strength, but high original bids show such long trump suits as to probably render side strength impotent.

Where both members of a team have been bidding the same suit and the one whose turn it is to bid next doubles, instead of passing to see what his partner will do, it must be taken to mean that the doubler holds a quick trick in adversaries' suit, probably the ace. Partner may find this information extremely valuable. In any event the double need not prevent him from continuing the bidding, if he thinks it best to do so. If one member doubles after his partner has passed, or if he doubles after having passed on the previous round, no such quick trick in opponent's suit can be inferred from this double.

Count trump tricks on opponents' calls with care. The ace or both K-Q or Q-J-10 are worth a sure trick, whether at declarer's right or left. K-J-10 count for a single trick if at his right, but are ordinarily good for 2 tricks when at his left. Even if the queen is in dummy, K-J-10-X is worth 2 tricks on either side, but if on declarer's right they are apt to be worth only 1 trick unless queen is in dummy. K-Q-X and Q-J-10-X are worth 2 tricks at declarer's left, and K-X is worth a trick. Q-X-X is probably worth a trick at declarer's left. Either king or queen at declarer's right requires an unusual combination of two lower cards to be worth a trick or else at least three other trumps. J-X-X-X, or any five trumps including a card as high as the 7, give a probable trick on either side of declarer.

Outside aces, or both K-Q, count as quick tricks in

side suits. Guarded kings, unless the latter are at the right of the bidder of those suits, or unless in very long suits, count as probable tricks. The only remaining side cards probably worth tricks, under ordinary conditions, are Q-J-10 and Q-J-9, which can be counted as worth a probable trick. If there are four cards or more in their suit they must be disregarded as probable tricks. An established plain suit cannot be counted as worth more than two probable tricks unless accompanied by abundant re-entry and considerable trump strength, so that declarer can be run out of trumps. Or, lacking the side-suit re-entry, by great trump strength. The table given below shows how useless a long side suit is when opposed to trump strength. The table takes into consideration cases where both dummy and an opponent can ruff by presuming that the dummy can either outruff the pone or else will ruff so high as to make pone's winning so expensive as to count to the declarer's credit later on.

*Chances in 100 that opponents will ruff your leads.*

*Number in*

| <i>your suit</i> | <i>1st Round</i> | <i>2d Round</i> | <i>3d Round</i> |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1                | $\frac{1}{2}$    | —               | —               |
| 2                | 1                | 9               | —               |
| 3                | 2                | 14              | 50              |
| 4                | 3                | 22              | 63              |
| 5                | 5                | 32              | 79              |
| 6                | 9                | 45              | 99              |
| 7                | 14               | 60              | 100             |

As compared with above, note in the next table the great power which a long line of trumps confers on the declarer. This table shows the chances in 100 that

the declarer has to win from his adversaries a given number of trump tricks merely on length of suit when holding the lowest possible trump sequence—2-3-4-5-6, etc.

| <i>Number held</i> | <i>Will win</i>  | <i>Times in 100</i> |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 6 trumps           | 3 tricks         | 55                  |
| 7 trumps           | 4 or more tricks | 75                  |
| 8 trumps           | 5 or more tricks | 90                  |
| 9 trumps           | 7 tricks         | 70                  |

An average rubber runs 400 points, or 200 points per game. At equal scores both sides have even chances, 2 in 4, to win the rubber. Winning or losing a game adds 1 in 4 or deducts 1 in 4 from those chances. One chance represents 1 game, or 200 points; 2 chances represent a rubber, or 400 points; while the 4 chances represent the difference between winning or losing a rubber, or 800 points.

If you have a choice between winning a game or doubling an opponent for at least 300 points penalty, always choose the latter, regardless of the score. In the long run all games, first, rubber, or second, are of equal value. Act precisely as you would in business if you could honestly take 300 for something worth only 200.

If you do not double you will average to win and lose the same number of rubbers, and thus come out even. If you double for 300 points in preference to going game, you will lose one-half the rubbers you might have won had you not doubled. Thus you will average to win 1 in 4 rubbers, at a value of  $400 + 300 = 700$  points. You will average to lose 3 in 4 such rub-

bers, each at a value of  $400-300=100$  points, or 300 points loss for the 3 rubbers. But you will average to win on 4 such rubbers  $700-300=400$  points, an average gain of 100 points per double, instead of coming out even, as you will average to do if you prefer games to 300-point penalties.

No point in the game seems more bewildering to most players than this very simple proposition: the amount in excess of 200 points which you win on a double, made in preference to going game, averages to be clear gain, regardless of how you and your opponents stand on the score.

Whenever you can surely set an opponent by at least 3 tricks you must double instead of going game. If you can surely go game, but are not certain that you can set an opponent more than 2 tricks, you had better go game. If you know that you can set an opponent even a single trick you had better double if you cannot surely go game.

If you are doubled, unless your partner has bid, you must not expect even a single trick's assistance from him when you consider whether you shall redouble. Refrain from a redouble, even on a certainty of success, if an avenue is open for opponents to bid anything which you cannot double for as great a reward.

For convenience we will refer to the two species of double given below by the names of the men who introduced them to New York club players. These are the only valuable informatory doubles now in use. The "Patton double" was devised in 1911 by C. L. Patton, and has been in constant use in the Knicker-

bocker Whist Club, New York City, since that date. The "Whitehead double" was first successfully utilized by Wilbur C. Whitehead in England and Italy, after which he brought it to the notice of New York players in 1914.

Both of these doubles have already been referred to under "Forced Bids," but for convenience they are reoutlined here.

It often happens that a previous adverse bid of 1-No Trump is made before you can carry out your intention of making the same bid on a powerful hand lacking a strong major-suit bid. If you have strength in all suits, so that opponents probably cannot run out any one of them against you, then you can bid 2-No Trump on probable ability to win at least 6 tricks, depending upon your partner for average help. You must not expect more of him unless he has bid. If your partner has bid, you require strength in only the three remaining suits to bid 2-No Trumps over opponent's 1-No Trump. If you are confident that opponents cannot go game, either at no trump or on your next opponent's possible take-out you had better assist partner's call, or pass and see what happens, unless you feel confident of making 2-odd if you overbid, with strong possibilities of going game. If 1-odd may be made by opponents and will give them game, you may feel compelled to bid 2-No Trumps on a dubious hand, if you are certain that you cannot be badly set, in order to save game. In any event, your bid of 2-No Trump over 1-No Trump should always mean that you have at least some strength in all suits. If habitually used this way, your partner can support

your bid over third hand's suit bid on the assumption that you hold a stop. Or he can double opponents' subsequent bids with the assurance that your hand offers some resistance to their bids. He can also make a major take-out of Three on about the same hand he would bid Two over your 1-No Trump bid.

The Patton double is reserved for cases where little or no strength is held in one suit. Sometimes it is used at a bad score where the hand has generally distributed strength not to exceed 5 probable tricks, with perhaps added possibilities. Such a hand probably cannot make 2-odd unless partner holds full or even more than average strength, and a good trump call by partner looks safer than a problematical 2-No Trump bid. In either case, this double is a request for partner to bid his best suit, or to bid 2-No Trumps if he holds high cards in more than one suit and has no good suit bid. If the suit bid is made, the doubler lets it stand if it is one of his good suits, but he bids 2-No Trumps if it happens to be his weak suit.

The Whitehead double is quite different. It is used by a player having a powerful no-trump hand which lacks a stop to an adverse suit previously bid. The double is a peremptory demand for partner to bid his best suit, or 1-No Trump if he has a stop to the adverse suit if it is led up to him, and at the same time has no long suit to bid. It is frequently too much to ask that a sure stop be held, if he lacks a good suit bid. If he cannot risk stopping even a lead up to him of the adverse suit, the double demands a bid of his best suit, no matter how weak it may be. It is preferable to bid a weak suit rather than 2-No Trumps

unless the adverse suit can be stopped twice, or unless good cards are held in addition to a single sure stop. The double must not be allowed to stand, unless the bidder can be defeated, because it will probably be more costly than bidding even an extremely weak suit.

After you have doubled the next opponent frequently attempts to prevent your partner from bidding by increasing the doubled bid or by changing it. This removes the obligation of your partner to bid except from strength, and you must double the new bid if you still deem it best to force a weak bid from him. If no intervening bid is made your partner can show genuine strength by bidding unnecessarily high in response to your double. If partner doubles a bid after you have shown general strength by doubling, his double states that he expects to defeat the new bid.

The Patton double was intended solely for use against a habitual bidder of absurdly light no-trumpers. The general result of the double was either a game for the doubler's side, or a fair penalty if his partner failed to make a bid. The double was made on so strong a hand that the no-trump bidder seldom made more than the odd trick. The double was not intended for use against players who made perfectly sound no-trump bids, and it will never pay to use it against them. In such cases, unless partner can make a bid without the double, the double generally results badly. If partner is strong you win a few tricks at 6, 7, or more points, instead of setting the no-trump bidder for 50 points a trick. If partner is weak, you go down at least 50 points a trick instead of saving game. If, instead of doubling a bidder of real no-trumpers on a

hand good for at least 5 or 6 tricks, you attempt to double him on a weaker hand, the results average to be extremely bad. You may save a game, or even defeat the player whose average no-trumper is strong, but you cannot hope to go game against him unless partner can bid without the encouragement of your double. The average character of the bidder's no-trumpers, quite as much as the strength of your own hand, must be considered before doubling when you cannot make a sound bid of 2-No Trumps over 1-No Trump.

The Whitehead double is quite a different matter. Here, the main purpose of the double is to determine whether partner can properly stop the adverse suit which has been bid. If he can do so, game at no trumps is the probable result. If he cannot do so, the average result of his suit bid is better than on the Patton double. The average quality of opponent's bids is also of less consequence, since a suit bid does not imply the strength at all calls that a no-trump bid does.

Both of these doubles expertly used have proved so hard to combat by ordinary means that it has become necessary to devise special redoubles by means of which the partner of the doubled bidder can at times disclose his holdings. If unsound doubles are made these special redoubles are deadly replies. Rather than complicate matters by introducing a new name for these redoubles, they will be called respectively "the Patton redouble" and "the Whitehead redouble."

Let us suppose that your partner bids 1-No Trump on hand No. 1 shown below, which is doubled by the

next player on No. 2, and that you hold No. 3, the doubler's partner having No. 4:

|    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | 10-9-7-6      | A-8-4         | A-J-10       | K-J-2           |
| 2. | A-Q-3         | K-J-10        | 8-5-4        | A-10-9-3        |
| 3. | K-J-2         | Q-7-2         | K-Q-7-3      | Q-6-5           |
| 4. | 8-5-4         | 9-6-5-3       | 9-6-2        | 8-7-4           |

You redouble your partner's bid in order to show the help you have for his no-trumper. This is the Patton redouble. The redouble encourages partner, and it may sometimes frighten an opponent into an unwarranted call which can be doubled for a heavy score. If partner can win even the odd at redoubled value it means game. In above example the redouble places the doubler in an unenviable position. Neither he nor his partner can bid, and he probably cannot win more than 4 tricks against the redoubled no-trump bid, although his hand would ordinarily be worth the double.

If partner bids very light no-trumpers, the redouble requires at least 4 possible and well-distributed tricks to be held by the redoubler. The character of partner's average no-trumpers, the average quality of the doubler's and partner's game, have all to be considered in deciding upon your necessary strength for a redouble.

The Whitehead redouble also shows several possible tricks, not necessarily quick tricks, but rather cards which are likely to win tricks, because they are over those of the player who announces that he holds high cards in the unbid suits. In the illustrations below

the first bidder holds No. 1 and bids 1-Spade, the next player doubles on No. 2, and the spade-bidder's partner redoubles on No. 3, the remaining player holds No. 4.

|     | <i>Spades</i>  | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |
|-----|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A { | 1. K-Q-J-9-5   | A-6-2         | 9-5          | 8-5-3           |
|     | 2. 6-3-2       | K-J-10-9      | A-Q-J        | A-J-10          |
|     | 3. 8           | Q-7-4-3       | K-10-6-2     | K-Q-9-7         |
|     | 4. A-10-7-4    | 8-5           | 8-7-4-3      | 6-4-2           |
| B { | 1. A-K-J-8-6-2 | 8-5           | 6            | 9-5-4-2         |
|     | 2. 7-4-3       | A-Q-J         | K-Q-J-9      | A-K-J           |
|     | 3. 9           | K-9-4-2       | A-7-5-2      | Q-10-8-6        |
|     | 4. Q-10-5      | 10-7-6-3      | 10-8-4-3     | 7-3             |

These redoubles show lack of help in the suit bid because the third bidder instead of redoubling would pass if he held both side help and trump help, because he knows that the next player must bid. If the third bidder held strong help for spades, with little besides, he would immediately raise his partner's bid, in order to shut out opposing bids. The redoubles also tell the original bidder that if fourth hand goes no trump he had better open another suit, in order to secure a lead through to his spades if he requires help to establish his suit. The redouble warns the original bidder not to continue his spade bids unless he needs only probable side tricks as help.

In case A the spade bidder will find his suit stopped twice if he opens it, and the no-trumper cannot be defeated. On the redouble he will open with his low heart, although he has only three, his partner will lead his singleton spade, and the spades cannot be

stopped more than once, while his ace of hearts serves for re-entry. The redouble will thus defeat the no-trumper.

In case B, if fourth hand ventures a no-trumper, the redouble warns the spade bidder to open his second best suit, diamonds. The lead through the spades enables them to badly defeat the no-trumper. If a direct opening is made of spades the no-trumper cannot be defeated.

As an important feature of the redouble is a promise of a lead through the no-trump bidder, the redouble must not be made unless at least one of partner's suit is held. Since fourth bidder is warned in advance of what will occur, he must not go no trump over a redouble as he would without it, with a stop which is only good if led up to. The proper use of these two doubles requires some thought and experience, but the correct use of the redoubles is an advanced feature of a thoroughly sound game, which is dangerous for any one to attempt against better players or with an unreliable bidding partner. Neither these doubles nor redoubles can be recommended for general use. They should be used only by a team which has carefully studied them and will properly use them.

## NO-TRUMP LEADS

The moment that dummy is spread the declarer knows the entire 26 cards of his side. All the remaining cards are hostile. As side player, you still know only 13 cards of your side. It is accordingly the duty of yourself and your partner to nullify all that you can of the declarer's advantage, by utilizing the various conventional ways of showing just what you hold. Under favorable conditions your joint cards average to win 1 trick less than they would if held by the declarer's side, merely because he knows his full resources better than you know yours. Failure to exchange correct information with partner, and neglect to follow the best methods of play, may cost you several more tricks. Begin your disclosures by selecting your best suit for the opening or "blind lead." Then lead from it the card which will most clearly show your holdings, as explained later.

As side player at no trumps usually your only chance to win is to establish a long suit. The declarer's discards must then curtail his long suit or weaken his remaining suits. The side first able to set up its long suit possesses the most powerful weapon to be found at no trumps.

The best suit to open is a solid one. This allows a

safe look at dummy. In general, open your longest and strongest suit when your partner has not bid. What you must do if he has bid will be found under "Leads to Partner's Strength."

There are seven general varieties of openings at no trumps:

- |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No. 1 Solid suits                                               | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-K-Q-J-10 \\ A-K-Q-J \\ A-K-Q \end{array} \right.$                                                                                     | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Each card is a sure trick.} \\ \text{The view of dummy and} \\ \text{the fall of the cards guide} \\ \text{you to a second opening.} \end{array} \right.$                                                                                 |
| No. 2 Probably established suits                                | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-K-X-X-X-X-X \\ A-K-Q-X-X-X \\ A-K-Q-J-X \end{array} \right.$                                                                          | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Each card is a probable} \\ \text{winner and an opportunity} \\ \text{is afforded to study} \\ \text{for a second opening.} \end{array} \right.$                                                                                          |
| No. 3 Suits probably establishable without pone's assistance    | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-X-X-X-X-X-X \\ K-Q-J-X-X-X \\ A-K-X-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$                                                                        | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{If holding in addition a} \\ \text{card of re-entry.} \end{array} \right.$                                                                                                                                                                |
| No. 4 Suits with 3 honors; long suits with 2 honors in sequence | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-J-10-X-X \\ A-K-J-X \\ A-K-X-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$                                                                               | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{With or without re-entry} \\ \text{several tricks may be} \\ \text{won either through partner's} \\ \text{ability to help or because the} \\ \text{declarer is long in the suit and} \\ \text{must finally lead it.} \end{array} \right.$ |
| No. 5                                                           | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-Q-X-X-X-X \text{ without re-entry} \\ K-Q-J-X \text{ without re-entry} \\ Q-X-X-X-X-X-X \text{ with another ace} \end{array} \right.$ | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Needing partner to win} \\ \text{one trick and lead back} \\ \text{the suit.} \end{array} \right.$                                                                                                                                        |
| No. 6 Suits having no re-entry                                  | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A-10-X-X-X \\ K-X-X-X-X-X \\ Q-J-X-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$                                                                           | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Requiring active co-operation} \\ \text{of partner to establish.} \end{array} \right.$                                                                                                                                                    |
| No. 7 Long weak suits                                           | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 9-X-X-X-X \\ 10-X-X-X \end{array} \right.$                                                                                              | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Incapable of winning a} \\ \text{trick except through being} \\ \text{partner's long suit.} \\ \text{Unlikely to be any one's} \\ \text{long suit.} \end{array} \right.$                                                                  |

At an early stage in the development of the game the dealer was the declarer. He usually selected no trump if he had no strong major suit. If eldest hand was extremely weak, the high-value suits were either divided, or else they were held by dummy or younger. "Opening short" was then apt to prove the best thing for partner, by opening up his best suit, or by going

through dummy's strength. The short opening was less good when each player had a bid, although some suits could not well be bid against a no-trumper. Partner can now bid a good 5-card suit to show a lead in case the no-trumper is continued. Thus the utility of the short opening has departed.

If your partner cannot make even a protective bid, and your only long suit has already been bid by an opponent, then your best lead may still be the top of a short supporting suit like 10-9-8, J-10, 9-X-X. Otherwise than that you had better open with your fourth best card from a powerless hand. Avoid leading from Q-X or J-X-X, since they might win on a finesse. Avoid also an opening from a short suit lacking supporting cards, like 8-X, 7-X-X.

Suits like A-X-X-X, K-X-X-X-X, moderately long and having a top honor, are more useful to hold for re-entry than to open. Your partner may require re-entry to establish a long suit even if you do not. In the absence of other possibilities you may, of course, be forced to open such a suit.

Having two honor suits of equal length, open the weaker one first, and use the higher cards of the other for re-entry. Open a suit like Q-J-X-X, and use an A-K-X-X suit for its re-entry cards.

In selecting the proper card to lead from a given suit several items must be considered:

1. Catching opponents' unguarded high cards.
2. Retaining control of the suit.
3. Making the necessary loss of a trick as expensive as possible for the declarer.
4. Affording partner a chance to utilize any strength he

may possess in the suit, and to lead it back while he still has cards in it.

5. Disclosing to partner what you hold in your suit to enable him to judge whether your suit or his own will best pay to play.

The length of your suit and whether you have or have not re-entry often influence the selection of the opening card.

Some of the leads in common use unnecessarily fail to meet some of these 5 requisites without compensating gain in other ways.

The following table shows the card most nearly meeting the requirements in a majority of hands.

These 19 regular leads are the most important features of the defense against a no-trumper.

#### OPENING LEADS AT NO TRUMP

| Lead  |    | Holding                                                                                                       |
|-------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ace   | 1  | Ace and any other honor, except king, with 7 or more in the suit and re-entry. Otherwise lead as given below. |
| King  | 2  | A-K-Q, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                    |
|       | 3  | A-K-J, 4 or more in suit with re-entry or 7 without.                                                          |
|       | 4  | A-K-10, 4 or more in suit with re-entry or 7 without.                                                         |
|       | 5  | A-K, 7 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                      |
|       | 6  | K-Q-J, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                    |
|       | 7  | K-Q-10, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                   |
|       | 8  | K-Q, 7 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                      |
| Queen | 9  | A-Q-J, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                    |
|       | 10 | Q-J-10, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                   |
|       | 11 | Q-J-9, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                    |
| Jack  | 12 | A-K-J, less than 7 in suit without re-entry.                                                                  |
|       | 13 | A-J-10, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                   |
|       | 14 | K-J-10, 4 or more in suit with or without re-entry.                                                           |
|       | 15 | J-10-9, 4 or more with or without re-entry.                                                                   |
| 10    | 16 | A-K-10, less than 7 in suit without re-entry.                                                                 |
|       | 17 | A-Q-10, 7 or more in suit without re-entry.                                                                   |
|       | 18 | 10-9-8, 4 or more in suit with or without re-entry.                                                           |
|       |    | See Note.                                                                                                     |

|                                |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4th<br>best<br>card<br>of suit | 19 | Any other combination such as:<br>Single honors any number in suit with or without re-entry.<br>A-K, less than 7 in suit with or without re-entry.<br>A-Q, A-J, A-10, less than 7 with or any number without re-entry.<br>K-Q, less than 7 in suit with or without re-entry.<br>K-J, K-10, Q-10, any number with or without re-entry.<br>A-Q-10, less than 7 in suit with or without re-entry.<br>Long suits without an honor with or without re-entry.<br>See Note. |
|--------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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NOTE.—10, 9, or 8 is sometimes led instead of the fourth-best card, as explained under top-of-an-intermediate sequence.

The general rule is to lead one of three honors, when two of them are in sequence. A subordinate rule is to lead the higher of two cards in sequence, unless one of them is the ace. The old Whist lead of 10 from K-J-10-X has nearly disappeared in favor of the jack lead, so as to conform to these rules. It is well, however, to remember that some players still lead 10 from K-J-10 suits.

The opening lead of an honor at no trumps usually shows that the suit holds 3 honors or 7 cards. The jack or 10 may also be from the top of a sequence, or the 10 from an intermediate sequence. In rare cases, either jack or 10 may come from a short supporting suit in a valueless hand, because its only long suit has previously been bid by the declarer.

The rule to lead one of three honors applies only where two of them are in sequence, and the suit holds over 3 cards, A-Q-10, are the only three honors where two are not in sequence. If re-entry is held, the ace is led from seven (just as if it were A-Q or A-10). Without re-entry the 10 is led to permit partner to return the suit, as he probably holds only two. Pone has 5 in 9 chances to hold either king or jack, or both. One of two honors not in sequence is led only from ace

and another honor with seven in the suit and re-entry. Leads from two honors in sequence without a third are made only when one of them is the king (see leads Nos. 5 and 8), or when the jack is led as the top of a sequence. The lead of a single honor only comes with the 10 as top of a sequence. These rules are for opening no-trump leads when partner has not bid.

An ace opening shows 7 cards in the suit with another honor and re-entry.

A king lead shows the presence of the ace or queen, or both. With both ace and queen the suit may be of any length either with or without re-entry. If either ace or queen is lacking the minimum length is 7 cards with or without re-entry, unless jack or 10 is held.

A queen lead shows absence of the king, but presence of two other honors (or the 9). The suit may be of any length over 3 cards regardless of whether re-entry is or is not held.

A jack lead denotes absence of the queen, but usually the presence of two other honors (or the 9), and a suit of more than 3 cards regardless of re-entry.

A 10 lead denies holding the jack. It usually shows the presence of two other honors, or else it comes from the top of a sequence and a suit of over 3 cards regardless of re-entry. It may also come from an intermediate sequence.

A fourth-best lead should, if possible, be made from a suit having fair chances to win a trick or more, without expecting partner's hand to do it all. If a low 4-card suit is headed by a sequence of at least 3 cards a better lead can be made with its top card than with its lowest one. Partner can usually detect the se-

quence lead and thus know that the suit contains no high cards.

A 5-card suit headed by jack, or a longer suit lacking an honor, can usually be established in 3 leads. Counting on your partner to return your lead once, you generally require at least 2 re-entry cards in your own hand, one to secure the third lead of your suit, and the other to get in after your suit is established.

The top-of-an-intermediate sequence lead, or, more briefly, a middle sequence or a midsequence lead, is frequently used instead of the fourth-best lead. All players lead the jack from A-J-10-X, the queen from A-Q-J-X as midsequence leads. This principle is merely extended to include leads of the 10, 9, and 8 (but no lower cards) when they head intermediate sequences, in cases where otherwise the fourth-best card must be led.

Where a midsequence headed by a lower card than the 8 occurs, the fourth-best lead is still in vogue, in suits of four or five cards. In suits containing six or more cards, the fourth-best card is led if a proper midsequence is lacking, unless the fourth-best card is higher than the 7. To avoid the lead of the 8 or 9, which may be mistaken for a midsequence lead, the fifth card is led. Thus the 5 is led from A-Q-10-8-5-3, to avoid the lead of the 8. But rather than lead the lowest card from a 5-card suit like A-Q-10-8-5, the 8 is still led.

There are two excellent reasons for these deviations from the old fourth-best lead. One is because the declarer frequently derived more benefit than pone did from that lead. The lead of a high card and the sight

of all the cards of his side averaged to be more valuable to the declarer than to the player who saw only half the cards of his side. The lead of a supporting card which can well be spared saves many a trick which the regular fourth-best lead loses. -

The occasional great utility of the lead can be illustrated by a simple example: eldest hand holds K-10-9-8 of a suit; dummy holds J-7-4; pone has Q-5-2; declarer has A-6-3. If the 10 is led, pone need not play his queen unless dummy's jack goes on. If the 8 is led, pone must play his queen, since the fourth-best lead tells him that the declarer has one card higher than the 8. It may be A, K, or 10. It cannot be the 9, for then the eldest hand would hold three honors, two of them being in sequence, so that an honor would have been led. When there can be only one possible way to win all the tricks in a suit, you must assume that those conditions exist, and you must play as if you saw them. Consequently pone must assume from the 8 lead, that partner has A-K, and that declarer holds the 10. His assumption causes him to play his queen. As a result, both adverse ace and jack win tricks. With the 10 lead only the ace can win. The reasons why the fourth-best lead is so illuminating will be found under "Conventional Plays."

The lead from a midsequence of only two cards in a 4-card suit frequently causes the loss of a trick which the fourth-best lead would save. Six times in 10 an adversary will also hold four or more cards of elder's 4-card suit, and can thus outrank the leader's lowest card. In the long run with 4-card and 5-card suits

it does not pay to lead from a midsequence of fewer than three cards.

In leading from a sequence always lead the top card, unless that is the ace; in this case lead the king. On the following round lead the lowest card in your hand sure to win a trick. This is to show the length of the sequence. From A-K-Q-J-10-8 or K-Q-J-10-8 lead the king. On the second round lead the 10. The third round lead the lowest remaining card of the sequence—in this case the jack. At no trumps your partner cannot tell whether you hold the ace or whether the declarer is saving it to win the third round. In any event, the sequence is so long that it cannot matter to your partner. At trumps it would be evident that you held the ace, or the declarer would have won the first trick. In case the 9 fell to your king you would lead the 8 instead of the 10 for the second round, since the 8 will win as surely as the 10 after the 9 has been played. It is your partner's business to note the fall of the 9 and to interpret correctly your lead of the 8. At trumps, unless you open the suit after all trumps are exhausted from your partner's hand, the second lead of a very low card of a sequence might possibly fool him into thinking that you held only the ace, king, and the low card, and were offering him a ruff to enable you to save the ace for future use. Hence the safer way to lead from a long sequence at trumps is to go down in regular order, K, Q, J, and so on, instead of at once showing the number in sequence.

Never lead from the middle or bottom of a sequence, either carelessly or to fool declarer. It is almost cer-

tain to fool your partner and may cost you several tricks, as well as your partner's confidence.

Do not expect partner to follow suit twice to winning cards of your long suit (or to follow once and win the second trick), and still be able to lead you back a third round. It can be done 63 times in 100 if you only hold 4, 54 times if you hold 5; but only 42 times when holding 6, and 32 times in 100 if you hold 7 of the suit. Where high cards are probably insufficient to clear a suit this probable inability of your partner to lead a third round necessitates in many cases a low opening lead when you hold no re-entry. Such procedure loses the first trick two-thirds of the time, but it gives the pone enough better chances to lead a second round (if he holds re-entry) to more than compensate for the times you might be fortunate enough to clear the suit, had you made high leads at first, in order to catch opponents' unguarded honors.

Take this suit, A-K-J-X-X-X, without re-entry. If you open with the top honors to try and catch the queen your average chances to establish it are only 48 in 100. If you open with the king to view dummy, and then temporarily abandon the suit, if dummy lacks the queen, in order to secure a lead through the declarer, your chances are only a fraction better. If you lead your fourth-best card, the chances are 63 in 100 that you will finally establish your suit. You also gain 18 tricks in 100 deals over either of the first two methods. But if you open with your jack to force out the queen, your suit can be established 65 in 100 times. You also gain 27 tricks in 100 over methods No. 1 and No. 2, and 9 tricks in 100 over using

the fourth-best lead. With only 5 cards in the suit the fourth-best lead is slightly better than the jack lead, and it is still better than the jack lead when you hold only four cards in the suit. But these differences are so very trifling that they are apt to be outweighed by the chances that partner will prefer to try the establishment of his own best suit in preference to helping you, unless you disclose your great strength by an honor lead. If your fourth-best card happens to be very low, or if it happens to be so high as to appear to be a supporting lead or top of a low sequence, partner may readily think that your suit is hopeless.

Without re-entry, more certain results accrue from leading out the honor immediately below the missing one than by attempting to catch it by means of higher leads. With proper cards of re-entry more gain comes from high-card leads. You then add your chances of re-entry to partner's small chances of being able to lead your suit. This method averages to gain about one-quarter trick per hand over the method necessary when no re-entry is held.

The second no-trump lead from a suit like A-Q-J-X-X, if the king does not cover your queen lead, will be the jack, but the third lead must depend upon circumstances. If the king lies well guarded in dummy, the declarer may refuse to play it upon the queen because he believes that you are leading from the top of a sequence Q-J-10 and others, and that your partner holds the ace. In that case the deception is kept up by a second lead of the jack, which will probably be passed also. If the king still has a guard and pone and declarer have followed both times, the 10 must

have been drawn, and none of the suit remain except those held by yourself and dummy. If you are without re-entry the ace must be played to save that trick and to note from his discard what pone wants led. If you have re-entry your three remaining cards will win two tricks, and the other must be surrendered to dummy. If your re-entry card is perfectly safe, and especially if it belongs to dummy's strongest suit, your best plan is to lead out your ace, followed by a small one for dummy to win. Your remaining card of the suit will then be good. If your partner shows by his discard, at the time your ace is led, that he holds a suit of real value, it depends upon the certainty of your re-entry whether you should next clear your suit or whether you should lead the pone's suit at once. If you believe that his suit will be worth two tricks more on an immediate lead than it will be worth if he has to wait, you can abandon your hope of winning another trick in your own suit. It is never good policy, however, to abandon a sure trick on a mere chance of gain. If the declarer's side seems able to run out a solid suit before you can hope to re-enter, the delay may ruin your partner's hand, but adverse suits requiring establishment will give your partner plenty of chance for re-entry, and you can clear your own suit at once.

Upon an opening lead of queen from A-Q-J-X-X, two out of three times the king will lie with pone or declarer. The ace lead is an urgent demand for pone to underplay his highest honor, to enable you to see what opposes you. The king or queen lead is a somewhat less imperative demand to do this, while the lead

of a jack or 10 is still less urgent. If pone holds three to the king, he may unblock in the regulation style, followed in many places by playing his middle card on your queen and overplaying your jack with his king. The simplest and most satisfactory play is, however, to overplay your queen with the king, to show where it lies, and to lead back his next highest card. It is useless to hold up a high card unless it is needed to catch something shown by dummy. If the declarer holds three or four to the king he will, in all probability, let you win the first trick. It is likely that you cannot tell until the second round how the cards are distributed, and the only thing to do is to lead the jack on the second round, regardless of the other cards you hold. If the king does not fall on the jack, the ace must follow, and next a small card, if you have re-entry. If you have no re-entry and dummy's hand leads you to believe that your partner may have a third card of your suit, you can stop the suit after two rounds and try to put your partner in with another suit, in order to secure a lead of your own suit through the declarer. Without re-entry, and without hope that your partner has a third card of your suit, the only remaining thing to do is to lead your ace and then abandon the suit for one which may help your partner.

Being blocked on the third round of a suit is more than twice as serious as being blocked on its second round, because your partner's chances to hold three of your suit are more than twice as good as his chances to hold four. On that account it is better to be blocked the first or second round than on the third. The declarer knows this and acts accordingly.

Holding A-Q-J, the most common divisions of the suit are as follows:

| <i>If you have a<br/>total of</i> | <i>The others will<br/>usually hold</i> | <i>After the opening lead<br/>they will hold</i> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 4                                 | 4-3-2                                   | 3-2-1                                            |
| 5                                 | 3-3-2                                   | 2-2-1                                            |
| 6                                 | 3-2-2                                   | 2-1-1                                            |
| 7                                 | 3-2-1                                   | 2-1-0                                            |
| 8                                 | 2-2-1                                   | 1-1-0                                            |

As the missing king can rarely be more than singly guarded on the second round, the jack lead will usually bring it out, but the ace lead on the second round will probably cause a loss on the third round, with all that it entails. The comparatively few times an ace will be lost through such play will be more than made up by the number of times your partner can lead you a third round, if your original suit holds 4 or 5 cards. With a suit of over five cards the chances to hold you up until the third round are small. The chances, however, that partner can lead a third round if you are held up are still smaller.

The ace-queen-jack combination is no more important than various others. The reasons for entering into a discussion of several of the many problems which may arise from its opening is merely to illustrate certain points liable to come up on any combination.

1. If the first lead is lower than a missing honor to draw it out and fails to do so, the second lead should usually be made with the same object in view. Let an unavoidable block come as early as possible, to enable your partner to lead back your suit.

2. With a trick to lose and one to gain in a suit by playing its last cards, whether or not this should be done must depend largely upon what you can hope from your partner if you refrain.

3. It may pay temporarily to abandon a long suit while your partner has a return lead, if you have no re-entry, and if the declarer can block you, to try and put your partner in so that he can lead through the declarer.

## TRUMP LEADS

At trumps your best course as side player ordinarily is to win tricks with your strong cards of plain suits before the declarer can make discards and ruff. Also to utilize a weak trump suit in ruffs before trumps are led.

A marked difference in the "blind" (or opening) lead exists between trumps and no trumps. The proper lead varies from the normal if your partner has bid.

There are six general varieties of blind openings at trumps:

1. Leading from a sequence of high cards, or from 3 honors, as king from A-K and K-Q, or jack from K-J-10.
2. A strengthening lead, queen, jack, 10, or 9, as the top of a suit.
3. Leading a singleton, except the king. This latter card is never led unless accompanied by ace or queen.
4. Long-suit openings.
5. Low-card leads from short suits.
6. Trump attack.

Honor leads, either from long or from short suits, are generally the most efficacious. The lead of a winning honor other than the ace can rarely be criticized. An opening lead of the king from A-K, especially if the suit is short, is always good, as it enables you to view

dummy's hand before deciding what to do next, without losing control of your opening suit.

Strengthening leads from sequences like Q-J-10 or J-10-9 are not only apt to be useful to partner, but often result in winning later tricks with your own cards. It often happens that two higher cards, and occasionally three higher honors, fall on your lead of a low honor.

Short suits containing strengthening cards, even if not in sequence, when such cards are not likely to win on a finesse, are proper to open with the top card. Such a lead from Q-J-X, Q-J, J-10-X, J-10, 10-9-X, 10-X, 9-8-X, 9-X, serves a double purpose: it may draw a winning card from dummy or save one from playing a valuable high card. It also shows your partner that you have no higher card in the suit to which he can lead. It rarely does harm, and may greatly assist your partner. A strengthening card is probably useless for you to hold, and forms an important feature of the defensive tactics required by a weak hand, or by one holding tenaces up to which leads are desired.

A singleton ace is always a fine opening if you wish to ruff that suit. Any other high singleton is apt to prove a disappointing lead, as it will probably be mistaken for a strengthening card, and your partner will not return the suit for you to ruff. The lower the singleton the more apt you will be to secure the desired ruff. Opportunities to trump should not be sought if you hold the "blank" ace of trumps, two trumps headed by king, three to queen, four to the jack or 10-9, five of any kind. The one exception to the rule not to ruff when holding a guarded trump honor is

when dummy is over all your trumps, so that they are worthless except for ruffing. With six trumps or over you can seek a ruff.

Six tricks average to be won by trumps, and the average side suit can be ruffed by some one after the second round. Consequently long-suit openings, to be profitable beyond short-suit openings, with equal top cards in both cases, must be when your hand is suitable for offensive tactics, having strong trump support, or else abundant re-entry in the other two plain suits. In either of these cases the long suit can be established, and used to force the declarer to ruff until his hand is exhausted.

Unless the top of a low sequence or an intermediate card can be distinguished from the lowest of that suit, your partner may misread your lead. Because your lowest card ordinarily requests a return of the suit, if your partner has not bid on it. If you do not want it returned, refrain from low-card leads if you have another suitable lead of an honor, a strengthening card, or, in some cases, a trump.

Trump attack can be advantageously made only under certain conditions. It is proper with a doubling hand, one strong in trumps, with either a powerful side suit or with scattered high cards of plain suits. Do not lead your partner a trump if he has doubled, unless your hand is strong in trumps, or unless it has some trump strength and can also render outside help.

Holding nothing in plain suits, you can commence a trump attack from a sequence of high trumps, as A-K, K-Q-J, K-Q, or Q-J-10. This will pull trumps out of your weak opponent, and prevent his ruffing.

It may so reduce the declarer's hand as to enable your partner to get in a long plain suit without being ruffed.

When your partner has shown no suit, if you have to make the opening lead from a hand not warranting trump attack, the following table shows, arranged in order of their average desirability, the plain suits from which leads should be made.

#### OPENING LEADS AT TRUMPS

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Class 1 | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A-K} \\ \text{A-K-Q} \\ \text{A-K-J} \\ \text{A-K-Q-X} \\ \text{A-K-X-X} \end{array} \right\}$                                                                            | More than 3 out of 4 times these suits will win the first two tricks, because neither opponent can ruff. They give similar chances to win the third trick; with the queen, if dummy has just three of the suit; otherwise by opening a new suit of which dummy lacks the ace. |
| Class 2 | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A-K-Q-X-X} \\ \text{A-K-X-X-X} \\ \text{A-K-Q-X-X-X} \\ \text{A-K-X-X-X-X} \end{array} \right\}$                                                                          | These suits are more apt to be ruffed on first or second rounds, but give even chances of winning three straight tricks by opening a new suit on the third lead.                                                                                                              |
| Class 3 | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{A only} \end{array} \right\}$                                                                                                                                             | Gives practically a certain trick with an opportunity to discover from dummy's hand what partner probably most desires led.                                                                                                                                                   |
| Class 4 | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{K-Q} \\ \text{K-Q-J} \\ \text{K-Q-X} \\ \text{K-Q-J-10} \\ \text{K-Q-J-X} \\ \text{K-Q-X-X} \\ \text{K-Q-J-X-X} \\ \text{K-Q-X-X-X} \end{array} \right\}$                 | Such suits offer 1 in 3 chances of finding the ace with pone. In any event, the command of the suit is retained, even if the first trick is lost.                                                                                                                             |
| Class 5 | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Singletons lower than king} \\ \text{Sequences to Q, J, 10 or 9} \\ \text{Doubletons to 10 or 9} \\ \text{Long low suits} \\ \text{Short low suits} \end{array} \right\}$ | Offer 1 in 3 chances that pone can win the first trick, but do not retain the suit command.                                                                                                                                                                                   |

A-Q-10, A-J-10, and K-J-10, with or without smaller cards, are powerful when led up to, but are bad to open on the blind lead. If the missing honors lie with dummy they can be opened later, since he can evade your strength, regardless of how the lead comes. If the missing honors lie with declarer a gain comes through some one else opening the suit.

For similar reasons all tenaces and combinations of two honors not in sequence are bad to open blindly, as: A-Q, A-J, K-J, K-10, Q-10. So also are suits of low cards headed by a single honor. If the ace is led from a low suit you catch only the lowest card each player has, but when some one else opens the suit a high honor is apt to be killed, possibly greatly to your benefit. Three-card suits, unless containing a high sequence, also 2-card suits, without a high top card, are useless to open on your own account, and may cause your partner to lose a high honor, perhaps the king, which otherwise would have won a trick.

The proper card to play from a given combination not only must be the one giving the best chances to win the maximum, but also it must be selected with reference to giving all possible information to your partner. If you hold both ace and king, it is evident that you will as surely win the first trick whether the ace or the king is led, but if you play them in ascending order (king, ace) it means you have at least one more card; while playing them in reverse order (ace, king) means that your suit holds only the doubleton. Similar differences in the play of other combinations convey wholly different meanings.

The ace lead shows either a suit composed only of itself and the king or else a suit of any length which lacks the king. It denies holding the king with any other card.

The king lead always means that the ace or the queen, or both, are also held. It denies holding the doubleton ace. A singleton king is never led, as it stands better chances of winning if some one else leads.

The queen opening denies having either the ace or the king. It means that the jack is also held, either alone or with one or two others, or else that the queen is a singleton. It is not led as a doubleton lacking the jack, because it may win on a finesse or help partner more if another player opens the suit.

Jack is led from K-J-10 combinations, but otherwise denies holding a higher card of the suit. It is led from J-10-9, regardless of suit length, from J-10 with one or two others, also as a doubleton with the 10, and as a singleton.

The 10, 9, and 8 are sometimes used as top-of-an-intermediate sequence (or midsequence) lead, otherwise they are only used as given below. The 10 denies holding another honor with most players. But, as already noted, a few players still cling to the old lead of 10 from K-J-10 combinations. It is led from 10-9-8, regardless of suit lengths, from 10-9 with one or two others, as a doubleton with any lower card, and as a singleton.

The 9 is led only as the top of a sequence of any length, as a doubleton with any lower card, and as a singleton.

Any card lower than the 9 may be the top of a sequence of any length, an intermediate card of any suit, a doubleton, or a singleton. If led as the lowest, or as the fourth-best card of a long suit, it should indicate the leader's hope ultimately to win something in that suit. Reserve very low card leads for "come-on," and try to help your partner with a strengthening lead if all else fails.

If you open with a winning card so that you view

dummy's hand, seeking a favorable suit to open, remember that it is folly to lead through too great strength (like A-K), but proper to lead through any suit having a high missing card or two (like A-Q, or K-J). In the latter case your partner may win two tricks with the A-Q if you lead through dummy; but your partner can win only a single trick with the same cards if he is obliged to lead up to dummy's strength. Any tenace, or fourchette, shown by dummy (unless you hold the missing intermediate card) offers a good suit through which to lead.

King and low cards in dummy offers another good suit to open. If your partner holds the ace and queen of the suit, he can win with both of them, whereas he could not do so if he were forced to open it. A suit in dummy's hand suitable for opening on the blind lead is useless to lead through. Thus K-Q-J-X or the K-Q-X is not good to lead through, as they are good opening suits; but A-X-X-X is not bad to lead through. The ace is bound to win sooner or later. By letting it win at once you are perhaps clearing the way for your partner to win the next trick or two with the king and queen.

Singleton leads are not always easy to read. If they are very low cards they are more apt to be read than are higher cards. If the reading is easy, and the declarer wins the lead, trumps will almost certainly be led to prevent the threatened ruff. For these reasons singletons take fifth rank in the list of desirable leads, instead of first.

Notwithstanding its drawbacks, the hope of a ruff

is often all that weakness has, and should be sought in such cases by an opening lead of a singleton, regardless of its denomination. A doubleton headed by a strengthening card is all right to open from weakness, but only lead from a low doubleton as a last resort. The mischief you may cause by fooling your partner will average to outweigh your rare gains.

An established long suit cannot be run out until the declarer's trumps have been exhausted. An attempt to do so usually results in the declarer ruffing from one hand and discarding from the other, consequently a second suit soon falls short, and is ruffed when your side attempts to lead it. Ruffing from the weak hand and discarding from the strong hand ruins plain suits in which tricks could otherwise be won. If dummy is very short in your established suit, or, for that matter, in any other, holding at the same time a few small trumps and a very long suit which may be established against you; a cross-ruff may follow, dummy ruffing one suit and the declarer another one. Cut this off by leading trumps. Cut off dummy's chance to ruff, whether or not the "see-saw" threatens.

Under ordinary conditions an ace is rarely led on the blind opening. Its appearance commonly betokens extreme weakness, and usually shows one of two things: that it comes from a doubleton, preliminary to an attempt to ruff; that it comes from a very long weak suit to prevent a slam.

After dummy's cards are boarded it is useless to treasure a tenace of which the intermediate card lies in dummy. If you have ace-queen and dummy shows the guarded king, you can lead the ace when

convenient. The declarer will hardly be kind enough to lead the king up to your tenace.

If you hold three to the king and dummy fails to show the ace, you can lead a small card away from the king if you find that the declarer does not open the suit. It is probable that your partner has the ace, quite likely both ace and queen. It is unlikely that the declarer holds both ace and queen, or he would have tried to lead up to them from dummy. In any event, your king cannot be harmed by your lead, and great good may follow. If the ace shows in dummy, or if your king is singly guarded, you should not open that suit.

The table of "Opening Leads at Trumps" shows (under Class 5) that long low suits are, next to short low suits, the poorest possible ones to open. Remember that a side suit averages only two rounds before some one can ruff it. Only its quick tricks, its major and minor tenaces, or, at the worst, its guarded king and queen, are worthy of consideration as possible trick-winners, unless the declarer can be run out of trumps. If you open a suit headed by an ace, you must always lead the ace on the blind opening, and nearly always do so at other times. You cannot blindly lead away from an ace or a tenace. Leading off an ace, unless for a particular reason, is also an abominable lead. Leading away from a king is usually bad. If all your side suits are like any of these you had better lead a low trump to inform partner that all your suits should be led up to.

Sometimes your only possible opening is from a long suit headed by a single honor lower than the ace.

Open this with your lowest card, to make it unmistakable if a return lead is desired. Lead your fourth-best card at trumps only under special circumstances. Adopt this helpful practice, if you do not want a return of your long suit and have no other suitable to open: lead the top card of a sequence or the top of an intermediate sequence, or, if those are lacking, you can lead an intermediate card of the long suit. If you must open from one of the long suits shown below, and hold cards to which you want leads in other suits, lead the 10 in the first case, the 7 in the second, and the 6 in the third case, 10-9-4-2, Q-7-6-4-2, 9-6-4-2. Your partner will not waste time in returning your weak suit, but he will either lead winning cards from his own hand, or else he will lead back to dummy's weakness, through the declarer's strength, and give you a chance to make cards in a suit which you yourself cannot properly open. If your best suit is the Q-7-6-4-2, then lead the 2 instead of the 7, to request the return lead. Sticking to the rule that a low card generally desires an immediate return of a suit greatly increases your chances of a ruff with a low singleton lead, without detracting from your chances if the singleton happens to be a card not recognizable.

It seldom pays to lead low from a long suit unless headed by either the king or queen, and jack is the lowest card worthy of such a lead. Avoid the long-suit lead whenever a lead can be made from any suit ranking higher in the table of "Opening Leads at Trumps."

The sole advantage of the fourth-best lead at trumps is when the declarer's side is only slightly stronger than

opponents'. Then the accurate information conveyed by the fourth-best lead permits the side players to utilize the long suit to the best possible advantage. This often results in pretty end plays which win a trick or two more than any other opening can yield. When the declarer, as usually happens, is much stronger than his opponents, chances to save a slam or game, or to set his high opening bid, are frequently lost by bothering with a long suit, instead of garnering the few possible tricks which more direct methods could save.

Perhaps the fairest statement to make as to the relative value of fourth-best leads from long suits, and of leads of the lowest card of a long suit—only when the immediate return of the suit is desired, is this: the latter is more simple, and hence better adapted for general use; the former will be apt to win as many, or perhaps even more tricks in the long run, but the latter will be likely to save more points. The former method saves tricks generally worth only 6, 7, 8 or 9 points each. The latter method saves slams and games, it prevents contracts from being filled, and thus saves 50 or more points at a time.

Great trump strength and a side suit of more than 4 cards, or the long suit with two shorter suits strong in cards which cannot be led may be held. In either case you usually want your long suit played to force the declarer. If your fourth-best lead is unlikely to be misread you can make it, instead of leading your lowest card, in order to derive all possible benefit from its informatory value to partner. Of course the lowest card of four must also be its fourth-best card, but with

a longer suit you can refrain from leading the fourth-best card unless you believe that your side closely approaches the declarer's in strength. If your partner knows that you disapprove of the fourth-best lead at trumps, your departure in unnecessarily making such a lead will clearly show him your reasons for so doing.

If you adopt the above rational use of the fourth-best lead at trumps, using it only under special circumstances, it will only complicate matters at such times to introduce the midsequence lead, and the consequent avoidance of fourth-best leads higher than the 7. Reserve the last variation for no-trump leads. You can, however, always use the midsequence lead at times when no immediate return of your long suit is desired. Under the special conditions where you desire to play out your long suit a straight lead of your fourth-best card will be more informative than anything else. If, on the contrary, you really believe in the regular use of fourth-best leads at trumps, you had better use the system with or without its variations, just whichever system you play at no trumps.

## LEADS TO PARTNER'S STRENGTH

Your partner shows strength if he bids or if he doubles. In most cases this subordinates your hand to his, and your opening lead must take this into consideration.

In general, partner's previous bid of a specific suit calls for your lead of that suit, whether the final declaration is played at no trumps or at trumps. Sometimes an adverse shut-out bid prevents your partner from showing strength except by doubling. You are then obliged to open your own best suit. His use of either the Patton or Whitehead double always shows no-trump strength in 3 suits. The latter double also discloses great weakness in the suit which he has doubled. It sometimes happens that the next bidder shuts your side out from bidding, after your partner has made one of these doubles. Here again you must open your best suit.

If your partner has doubled a high-opening trump bid, or if he has used the Whitehead double and your side has then been shut out from further disclosures, it is probable that the least desired opening lead is a trump. Because he has doubled you must subordinate your hand to his and must play his game. If he has not bid when you hold a long suit headed by an ace, the wisest

thing to do is to view dummy, in order to see what your partner desires led. His trump strength may be very great either in high cards or in length of suit. He may have unusual side strength, perhaps an established suit with which he trusts to force the declarer. He may reckon upon using numerous small trumps to ruff side suits. Lacking a winning card, lead from the suit you have bid, or if you have not bid lead your strongest suit to show him where you can help. If you cannot help, open with a strengthening lead to show that you are powerless.

If an opponent has secured a trump contract over partner's no-trump call, when you hold strength in the other three suits, you can show this situation by leading a trump. This lead tends to reduce the play as soon as possible to a no-trump basis.

If partner has bid no trump it is almost never proper for you to seek a ruff. Your opening lead should show your strongest suit instead of your weakest.

Do not lead an ace from a short suit if the king is lacking. That ace is too valuable to be risked on an opening, when it may be needed to kill a high card lying with the declarer. Reserve the ace and open with your next best suit.

One reason for ordinarily preferring to open your partner's suit in preference to your own is that it is easier to establish a suit by leading up to it than by leading away from it. This is especially true when it happens that dummy has doubled or has gone over your partner's bid.

You must have a most excellent reason for not leading the suit which your partner has bid. Many games

are lost by attempts to be smart and pull off a coup in another suit.

If you hold both ace and king of another suit, you should lead the king before opening your partner's suit; then keep back the ace and open his suit. The king lead shows him you hold the ace so he can put you in later.

If you have a set-up suit, or re-entry and a suit which can be set up with a single lead (like A-Q-J-10-X or K-Q-J-10-X or K-Q-J-X-X-X), it is better to open it than your partner's suit at no trumps. It is most unlikely that the declarer would risk two such adverse suits, and consequently your suit is undoubtedly better to open than your partner's.

A rather unique situation sometimes presents itself where a singleton lead can be very advantageously made before you open your partner's suit. Say partner's 3-Heart bid has been overcalled with 3-Spades at a time when your hand is like this:

| <i>Spades</i> | <i>Hearts</i> | <i>Clubs</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> |    |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|----|
| A-4-3         | 9-6-5-3       | 8            | Q-J-9-7-4       | or |
| K-Q-5-2       | J-7-4         | J-10-6-3-2   | 4               |    |

In the first case lead your singleton club, and in the second case lead your only diamond. If your partner happens to have the ace and wins the first trick, you have done no harm, and unless his heart suit is set up he will doubtless return your lead. Probably the declarer will win the first trick and start leading trumps. In the first hand you will immediately stop him with the ace. In the second case you will

win either his first or second lead with the queen. As soon as you have won, you will open your partner's heart suit wherein he is apt to win the trick. Then he will return your short suit and let you ruff. You again lead hearts, and he again lets you ruff. In this way you can utilize one or two small trumps which otherwise would never win a trick. If your partner's hearts are not fully set up, the scheme may fail, but it is well worth a try. Ordinarily, singletons should not be led on your partner's double, or, if he has shown strength by bidding, unless they are aces. This particular card distribution makes it the best possible lead at trumps, provided your partner has a solid suit, or sits over dummy's honors in that suit.

If your partner has both bid and doubled, nothing but the possession of a set-up suit or the lack of one of your partner's suit can justify your first leading your own suit, with the exception of a single preliminary lead of the king, to show him you have an ace to which he can lead.

When your partner is the strong hand he is entitled to have his suit opened in any rational way he prefers. With positions reversed he must open your suit in your way. Partners must not play at cross-purposes. If partner insists upon absurdities, if you cannot quietly induce him to change his views, you had better avoid him in the future.

Both at no trumps and at trumps the general rule is for you to open with your highest card of partner's suit. The number you hold of his suit and the bidding frequently modify this general rule.

If 1-No Trump is bid over your partner's call you

must assume that the declarer holds a probable stop to that suit. If your partner has bid Two, fourth hand, over 1-No Trump, and the partner of the original no-trump bidder goes 2-No Trumps, you must assume that the suit is stopped at your left, instead of being stopped at your right, as in the first case. Holding three or more of your partner's suit to a high honor, the card you should lead depends upon which side of you the stop appears to be. If the stop seems to be at your left you had better lead off your highest card of partner's suit. If the stop appears to be at your right you can lead low, in order to retain part of the suit's strength back of the declarer. Lead your top card with fewer than three of partner's suit, or when you hold only three without a high honor, regardless of which opponent holds the stop.

Your objects are to clear partner's suit before he loses re-entry, to try to catch high adverse cards, to avoid unnecessarily blocking his suit, and to show as clearly as circumstances will permit what high cards and the number of his suit you hold. The methods already given usually accomplish your objects to the best advantage with a trained player. Less skilled players may misread your leads unless you start with the highest of their suits, or, at least, if you lead low unless you have supported them. In the latter case they can hardly suspect your lead of being either a singleton or your top card. If you do not support a beginner's bid and, for example, lead the 6 from K-9-8-6 he will often mistake it for the top card you hold. If he wins the first trick with the ace from A-J-10-7-5, when dummy shows the singleton 4, your

partner is apt to place both king and queen with the declarer and abandon the suit instead of leading back his jack through declarer's queen.

At trumps, as already stated, number showing is nearly always of less value than showing your high cards. So in the long run you will win most by leading the highest card you hold of your partner's suit.

## CONVENTIONAL PLAYS

Conventional plays are utilized by side players to offset as much as possible the declarer's advantage derived from playing two hands. Unnecessary conventions should be avoided, since they will not be understood by strangers, and only tend to obscure more important ones. Conventional bids, doubles, redoubles, and opening leads have already been given. Echoes, calls, and discards are also employed to convey invaluable information. No secret code between players is permissible. All players are entitled to know what conventions are to be used. Those given here are so generally understood that no explanation is needed before using them with strangers.

### RULE OF ELEVEN

The fourth-best card is the conventional lead at no trumps when an honor cannot be led from great strength.

The number of pips on any fourth-highest card led, deducted from 11, shows the number of cards outside the leader's hand which are higher than the one led. This is known as the "rule of eleven." If a 7 is led it shows that 4 higher cards are held by the remaining

players. If dummy holds 2 higher cards, and the leader's partner has 2, it proves that the declarer cannot win the trick from his own hand, and thus permits the leader's partner to save his higher cards if dummy "ducks" the 7 (plays a lower card than the 7).

Your partner may lead the 8, for example, from K-J-9-8-5. Deducting 8 from 11, you realize that outside his hand there are only 3 cards capable of winning over his lead. Dummy shows Q-6-2, and you hold A-10-4. It is at once evident that the declarer's hand is helpless, with not over 3 small cards of the suit, and that your partner must hold at least three others, including K-J-9. Consequently, you reserve your ace and win the first trick with your 10 upon the play of the 2 from dummy. You return the lead with your ace, then lead your 4. Your partner overplays the 4 with the king, captures the queen, and has cleared his suit so that each of its remaining cards wins a trick.

If the leader's fourth-best card is below a 6, the information conveyed is small, but it always shows how many high cards are lacking in his suit. This enables his partner to decide whether he holds a more readily establishable suit than the leader.

### THE ECHO

The most used and most useful signal is the "echo." It is given by playing or discarding an unnecessarily high card of a suit, followed on the next opportunity by a lower card of the same suit.

It is most commonly employed to call for a specific

suit to be led by partner, either at trumps or at no trumps; to request him to lead a third round of a suit he is playing at trumps; and to show him at no trumps the number held of a suit he has opened.

### PLAIN-SUIT ECHO

The "plain-suit echo" is used only at no trumps, to show four or more cards of the suit your partner is leading. Play your second highest card on his first lead when not holding winning cards, your next highest card on his second lead, and so on until you have only two cards left. Your highest card is then played, and last of all your lowest card. With 10-8-5-3-2, you would play them in this order, 8-5-3-10-2. The echo, followed by a still lower card, thus shows more than 4 of the suit. The echo, then a higher card, shows just 4 of a suit.

In some circles the unnecessary custom of echoing with only 3 cards of partner's suit is followed. If only 8-5-3 are held the cards are played 5-8-3. Thus the first two cards in ascending order, followed by a lower card, show three of partner's suit. In New York it is customary to play three cards thus, 3-5-8. Just as it is a general custom to play two cards thus, 3-5.

This logical play of cards at no trumps serves the double purpose of disclosing to your partner the number held and of avoiding blocking his suit. Having left until the last your highest original card and your lowest, you can win a trick at any time and still return your partner's lead.

Your echo in this case shows that the declarer can

hold few of your partner's long suit, and offers your partner encouragement to continue the suit, which he might abandon if he believed the declarer's suit to be very long and yours to be very short.

## UNBLOCKING

Carelessly "blocking" the run of partner's suit constitutes one of the worst possible offenses.

"Unblocking" is effected by means of the plain-suit echo, as already explained. Nothing else is needed except in cases where you hold honors in a partner's suit. If these honors are necessary to catch a card which otherwise would win a trick for dummy, they must be retained for that purpose. On a low lead from partner honors are used to try to win the trick and to return his lead. If not needed for this purpose, honors should be "underplayed" or "overplayed" on high cards led by your partner, both to avoid blocking him and to ease his mind concerning where they lie. If your suit contains over 4 cards, a high enough card must be retained to win over the last card of the suit which your partner can play, so that you can make good your last cards of the suit. Keep track of the cards played, or else your 5-card suit may block a still longer suit held by your partner.

More tricks are lost by underplay than by overplay. Never hesitate to take away your partner's trick with a card of his suit not actually needed to set it up. If dummy is very short of partner's suit the declarer may be long. In such cases avoid unnecessarily playing an honor which may be needed to clear partner's suit.

Unblocking methods apply especially to no-trumpers, although they can be used equally well at trumps after trumps are exhausted, or if it is desirable to "force" the declarer (make him unwillingly trump a suit by continually leading its winning cards). This latter process is a splendid way of weakening the declarer's hand, but should never be attempted when the "weak hand" (the non-declaring adversary) can ruff, while the strong hand can follow or discard.

With a shorter suit than your partner's a high card must be held up in a case like this:

Queen is led from Q-J-10 (or Q-J-9) and others, dummy shows K-7-5, you hold A-8-2. Unless dummy's king is played on the first or second round the ace must be retained to catch the king, although doing so will block the suit. It is better to have you block the suit and win the trick than to have dummy block it and win both the trick and the lead.

In a case like the following, however, you should not hold up a high card, since dummy can outwait you: Dummy shows Q-6-3, you hold K-7. Whether an honor or fourth-best card is led, you must put on your king. If you hold off, your partner may abandon the suit, particularly if the declarer should win the first trick. In any event, holding back your king will block the suit. The queen will probably be withheld until the third round and block it again. Moreover, if a fourth-best card is led, failure to put on your king may enable the declarer to win the first trick with a low card, perhaps a singleton. Possibly the declarer holds both a low card capable of winning over the fourth-best lead and the ace; in this case he can win three

tricks in your partner's suit if you fail to put up your king. If you hold ace and another, instead of above cards, the ace must go up the first time.

Holding either ace or king, with one or two others, with three to the queen in dummy, on a jack lead do not overplay if the queen is held back. It is better for you to block the suit than to have it done by the declarer. If you block your partner's suit you will try to find his re-entry; but the declarer will try to avoid it. The jack may be from A-J-10 or K-J-10, with others, or from a suit headed by J-10-9. In the first two cases your holding back will result in your winning every trick in the suit. In the last case, the declarer will either be forced to put up his highest honor or to lose the trick.

If the hands are reversed, and you hold three to the queen, while dummy has a short suit headed by the ace or king, what you must do depends upon your partner's style of game. If he is apt to lead short you must play your second-best card on the jack lead. If he wins the first trick you must then play your queen, even if dummy's ace or king goes on. The only reason for refusing to lay it the first time, with a partner prone to lead short, is to avoid helping declarer establish the suit. If partner follows the best practice of avoiding short leads, you must overplay his jack with your queen on the first round, and return the lead if your queen holds the trick.

With 5 or 6 cards of a suit, you probably have a longer suit than your partner; unless your partner leads a very low card you cannot be certain of this until the declarer is forced to make his first discard or

unless dummy's suit is long enough to prove that the leader cannot hold over four of the suit.

In such a case, if your partner leads winning cards, do not interfere with him. He is clearing the suit for you. If a card led is not certain to win the trick, you must overplay, if certainly able to win it. When you can outplay all your partner's remaining cards take the lead away from him. If you hold the winning cards you had better take away his lead on the second round, or he may believe the declarer is waiting to win the third round.

With your partner holding A-K-Q-J-7, when you have 10-8-6-4-3-2, your regular play of 8-6-4-3 will cause your 10 to win over his 7 on the fifth round. If, however, he held A-K-Q-7, you would have to be on the watch to play your 10 on the fourth round, instead of your 3, or your suit would be blocked.

### THIRD-ROUND CALL

The "third-round call" is an echo from the leader's partner when a king is led at trumps, to request that the suit be led 3 rounds, because the partner can win the third trick either by ruffing or with the top honor not held by the leader.

An opening lead of a plain-suit king at trumps always means that its leader has also the next card to it—either the ace or the queen, or both. You accordingly know that your partner has the ace if he opens with the king when you have the queen. *Vice versa*, you know that he holds the queen if you have the ace.

If you hold three cards to the ace or queen when

the king is led, you know that your partner can win the first two untrumped rounds of the suit, and your echo informs him that you are able to win the third round unless trumped.

When you hold only two cards of the suit from which a king is led, if you are both able and willing to trump the third round, you echo to state that fact.

It is useless to echo if dummy's suit is shorter than your own. It is also useless if you and dummy each hold only two cards of the suit if his trumps all exceed your own in denomination. In either case dummy would win by ruffing, unless the declarer held the queen, and a trick would be lost through the echo.

If you and dummy jointly hold more than 7 cards of the suit, you should not echo, even if you hold ace or queen. If you and dummy jointly hold 8 cards of the suit, you know that your partner and the declarer have between them only five of the suit. Consequently, either your partner cannot lead a third round or else the declarer can ruff it.

The leader must disregard the echo if he and dummy originally had 9 or more of the suit, since his partner and the declarer can hold only 4 of the suit between them, and the declarer can ruff the third round over the pone. There are many cases where it is desirable to keep on leading a suit to weaken the declarer by forcing him to ruff, but these cases lie outside the province of the convention in question.

The third-round call, as outlined here, has safeguards not employed in the ordinary "call-for-a-ruff" and "down-and-out" signals, and for that reason is to be preferred to them. Players who show by the

echo the queen, as well as ability to ruff the third round, average 13% more tricks on the call than those who only echo to show the ruff.

At times a trump is too valuable for other purposes to spare it for ruffing. There is never any obligation upon you to ruff in such a case, and you have merely to play your cards without using the echo.

It is usually incorrect to echo with an honor, but at times it is best to echo even with a queen. If you hold only Q-J when partner leads the king you can underplay the queen if you do not desire a ruff. This will insure partner's lead of a small card to your jack. If you first play the jack a green player may lead his ace to see what you will next play. On partner's opening ace lead, play jack from K-J-10 if queen is in dummy, and play 10 from Q-10-X if king is in dummy. Various other similar situations arise where echoing with an honor is desirable. Some players habitually echo with the 10 from 10-X, but no player ever regularly uses a higher honor in this way to call for a ruff. If jack is in dummy and you should echo with 10-2 on partner's king lead from A-K, he might read the queen in your hand, so you must be careful to drop the 2 on his king. Although many players refuse to echo with the 10, in the long run it pays to echo with 10-X when your meaning cannot be mistaken.

### CALL FOR A SUIT

You request partner to lead a specific suit, either at trumps or at no trumps, by means of your discards. An echo in a suit is a request for that suit to be led

to you. If you believe that you will have only a single discard before another suit is led, you must start your echo with a card sufficiently high for partner to realize that it is not the lowest one you hold. Any card higher than the 7, even if the echo is not completed, is usually interpreted as a signal to "come-on." Always use the highest encouragement card that you can spare, to distinguish it from a discouragement card. If you cannot well spare a high card of a suit, at a time when 2 discards are possible, the discard of your lowest cards of the 2 suits you do not desire led tell by inference that you desire the remaining suit led.

### THE DISCARD

The combination discard is now used almost everywhere. It combines ability to call for a suit by means of a single unnecessarily high card, or by an echo, with ability to disapprove of a suit by means of its lowest card.

Two cards of any denomination call for a suit if played in reverse order, or reject a suit if played in normal order. The six lowest cards discarded singly reject a suit, the seven highest cards discarded singly call for a suit.

The first discard made is usually the most important to note. Late discards should not be considered, unless made very emphatic by an echo, or by the unnecessary discard of an honor, since it often happens that late in a hand cards of moderate size must be discarded from a suit not desired, to protect another suit from attack.

If you note that your partner does not discard from a particular suit you should try to guard the one from which he is discarding, and discard from the one he appears to be guarding.

Always remember that a discard from great strength means only the loss of a single trick; but unguarding a weak suit, or failure to save one or two cards of your partner's strong suit, may mean the loss of several tricks.

If you have no suit which you desire led, at least you probably have a suit in which you can save a trick or two if you discard wisely. As a general thing 3-card suits suffer more from discards than either longer or shorter suits containing equally high cards. Two-card suits and 4-card suits are next worst, and suffer about equally. Next come 1-card suits and 5-card suits, which also suffer about equally from discards. Six-card suits suffer less damage than any previously mentioned; 7-card suits still less, and so on.

Considerable experience is required to tell even approximately what can best be spared from some hands. It is folly to hoard up all the cards of a long suit without re-entry cards if your partner cannot put you in. Late in the hand some one will probably be forced to lead the suit, but in the mean time all chance to stop another suit, or to help your partner establish his long suit may have been wasted by discards from your weak suits. On the other hand, if the chances to play out a long suit are promising, discards had better be risked elsewhere. With ace and queen of a suit wherein you hold the "doubleton" king, showing in dummy on your right, and the declarer leading a long suit, it may

be necessary to "blank" your king to save guards to another suit. If the ace of a suit of which you hold the king lies at your left, with Q-J-10 at your right, you cannot well spare even one of several guards to your king.

## **ELDEST HAND**

Eldest hand, or "elder," is the player on declarer's left, the player who makes the blind lead. After the opening lead any player who wins a trick becomes the "leader" for the next round. Leader, or "first hand," "second hand," "third hand," and "fourth hand" are titles showing the order of play on a given round.

Opening leads to meet all circumstances will be found in chapters: "No-Trump Leads," "Trump Leads," and "Leads to Partner's Strength."

## **FIRST-HAND PLAY**

After the opening lead eldest hand should continue to lead winning cards if he has them, in most cases; but it is folly to go on with a losing suit unless for a special purpose.

At trumps you can lead through dummy's strength, try to give partner a ruff, attempt to establish a cross-ruff, force the strong hand, or lead a trump to prevent dummy from using a trump or two in ruffing a short suit.

At no trumps your original suit had better be continued, unless your partner has refused to lead it back and you desire to substitute his suit, or unless you find

too great adverse strength, even if pone returns your lead.

Should dummy have a nearly established suit at no trumps, with an ace and small card for his only re-entry, while you hold the king and others of his re-entry suit, lead out your king, to prevent anything except the ace winning. If dummy passes the king lead out your small card to complete your removal of the re-entry ace.

Dummy's cards, and those already fallen, are additional guides to the best play for eldest-hand after the first lead. These may decide him to continue with his original suit, or to open another one. At trumps he must especially avoid permitting the weak hand to ruff. Either at trumps or at no trumps great care must be used not to play off winning cards and thus leave the rest of the suit set up for the declarer's future use. At no trumps it is particularly bad to open new suits for the declarer, and assist him in their establishment by letting go cards which otherwise would block his play. Your partner may have some use for re-entry even if you have not. At no trumps, especially, discontinue leading a suit only when it is evidently contrary to your interests to continue, either because of too great adverse strength or because another much better suit is disclosed.

Your partner may fail to return your suit for three reasons: because he has none, because dummy displays too great strength in the suit, or because pone believes his suit to be better than yours, since more tricks are to be had from it, or because of its easier establishment.

You cannot expect further assistance on your suit if pone has opened one of his own. The first thing to attempt is to discover why your partner opened the new suit. The answer must lie either in dummy's or pone's cards. If the exposed cards of your suit are not especially strong, the change of suit comes because pone's cards demand it, and his lead should show as clearly as possible whether it is because he holds great strength in the suit he opens or because he holds none of your suit. In the latter case he is probably leading up to dummy's greatest weakness, trusting to luck to gain re-entry for you. If it is apparent that the pone is merely doing his best to assist, you can go on with your own suit. When it is clear that he has a better suit than yours the change of plan must be made on your return lead. If the case is doubtful, you had better abandon your suit, if it is at all weak, to see what his suit can offer.

In a case like the following you must resume your own suit immediately upon re-entry:

You lead either the 9 or the 8 (according to whether you use midsequence or fourth-best leads) from A-J-9-8-5-3, the declarer plays low from dummy's 10-6-2, pone overplays your card with the queen, and declarer wins with the king. Then the declarer opens a suit wherein dummy has ace-queen, and loses the finesse to pone's king. The latter opens the only suit in which you hold re-entry, and puts you in. As you have five straight tricks in your own suit you must resume it, and later on see what you can do to assist your partner. Should the declarer win the first trick with the 10, and still hold over you the K-Q-7, the

case becomes very different. With your sole re-entry gone, or unless you hold enough re-entry in your own hand to establish your suit, you must abandon your suit for partner's.

Before making a change of suit it is ordinarily best to win a sure trick in your first suit if it is unlikely to be opened again; but it is unwise to do this if you have no lower stop, because that leaves the suit in such condition that the declarer can make an easy trick or two. If your original suit is quite apt to be reopened by the declarer, a desirable change of suit should be made before playing your winning card from the original suit, since it affords you re-entry for future use.

In case your opening lead has been lost your partner may have called for a suit in his discards to the declarer's leads. If you happen to re-enter before your partner does, it is often quite difficult to know whether to continue your own suit, or to lead the one requested by pone. His call may merely show a desire for a lead through dummy, because the latter overtops all pone's honors, or it may indicate ability to win a single trick, or it may possibly show a solid suit. If your own suit requires the active co-operation of your partner to be valuable, it is best to answer the call at once, unless you can see that the declarer must lead pone's suit later, and that pone cannot have any great strength in it. Nothing less than a surety on your own suit warrants disregarding a possible call from a solid suit. The ace is often the best discard to show such a condition, and must never be disregarded beyond the time necessary to lead out your own winning cards in other suits.

While your partner's discards can be made most significant, those of the declarer are apt to be purposely misleading.

A return of your no-trump lead by pone merely means that he lays no claim to having a better suit of his own, beyond that it is quite non-committal. All his plays must be studied to determine what he desires for his share in the game. A return of your lead at trumps with a low card, instead of a lead to some great weakness in dummy, probably shows ability to ruff the third round of your suit. His lead of a new suit up to pronounced strength in dummy should show a singleton at trumps. If dummy's suit is very long it may possibly be done in the belief that you can ruff.

The usual rule, when having nothing very particular from which to lead, and being in ignorance of the pone's desires, is to lead through dummy's strength in plain suits.

At no trumps the declarer presumably has strength in at least three suits, or abnormal strength in one and something in one or two more. A lead through dummy's unbid strength is consequently less apt to be of advantage to the pone than a lead through a very weak suit of dummy's. In the first instance the declarer probably possesses the missing strength, while in the latter case it is usually divided between declarer and pone.

Pone's failure to return your lead with a card higher than dummy holds of a low suit should mean that the declarer has all the missing strength. An original lead of pone up to K-J-X in dummy, with much weaker suits also there, is apt to be made, hoping that you

hold the ace and can then return the lead through to pone's queen.

Ordinarily, the best card to lead through strength is the top of a sequence or the highest from small cards.

## SECOND-HAND PLAY

The following rules are helpful to both eldest hand and pone at second-hand play. The former can use more discretion than the latter in their application, because the cards coming next after the pone are concealed.

1. Holding a fourchette over a card led, never play lower than its upper card. (Thus, play the 7 on the 6 led if you hold the 5 also).

2. Cover an honor led, even if the dummy can outplay it, unless a special reason exists for ducking—such as possessing the lowest cards of a long suit headed by a single honor.

3. It is generally best to cover a card led in sequence to those in a strong dummy. It may enable your partner to win a later trick.

4. It is useless to cover in above case if dummy is so strong that no hope exists for your partner to win a trick in the suit. (Your only chance lies in the declarer running out of the suit, so that dummy will finally be forced to lead a losing card up to you. Thus under No. 3 it is best to cover the declarer's 10 with the queen from three, when dummy shows A-K-J-X, because four to the 9 in partner's hand can win a trick. Under No. 3 it is useless to cover the declarer's 10 with queen from four, when dummy shows A-K-J-X-X-X. It is impossible for either pone or declarer to hold over two of the suit with eleven cards in sight. It is possible that the declarer is leading a singleton, and, failing to drop the queen from your hand, he may overplay his 10 and make your queen good for the third or fourth round, depending

upon whether he overplays with his jack or king on the first round).

5. Hold command of the opponent's long suit at no trumps as long as possible, to run their short hand out of leads.

6. Do not cover a clearing-card lead with a winning card unless holding back may cause you to lose it later. (On a queen led up to dummy's J-10-9-X-X with the ace unplayed, do not cover with the king from three or four. Your partner may have the ace. If the declarer has the ace he cannot catch your king, and by holding back you can probably prevent him from establishing the suit).

7. Holding 2 honors in sequence and a low card, "split honors" on a low lead by covering with the lower honor.

8. Save honors barely guarded, like K-X, Q-X-X, J-X-X-X, at the first opportunity. Hold back well-guarded honors to give your partner a chance to win with a less-favored card.

9. Play low on a low lead, unless you can split honors or cover with a card from a fourchette, or can save a badly-guarded honor.

10. Play the smallest of a long series of low cards which fail to hold a fourchette over a low lead. The higher cards may later win a trick.

11. Win a trick cheaply to save your partner from playing a higher card.

12. Do not hesitate to sacrifice a high card to force one still higher out of dummy, if doing so will enable either you or your partner to win a later trick.

Always know what you are going to do and play quickly, but avoid the appearance of unnatural haste. Both hesitation and ostentatious assurance in playing cause the declarer to ponder the probable cause.

The detection of what the declarer is attempting when he opens a suit often shows what you should play to most hamper him. He may desire to clear a suit; merely to put the lead in dummy's hand in order to

open up another suit, and have the lead come up to his own tenace; to deprive your side of a re-entry card, or make re-entry for dummy; to pull out your trumps; to gain a ruff from dummy's weak hand; to start a cross-ruff; to lead up to dummy's strength on one suit, and back to his own on another suit. Always try to discover just what he is attempting to do, as it will sometimes enable you to defeat his purpose by departing from a general rule.

The following are examples of constantly recurring cases where individual thought is needed to make the best play of eldest hand's cards on leads by the declarer.

Suppose that the declarer leads the jack up to dummy's A-Q-7-4 when you hold K-9-8-5. You can see 9 cards. It is possible that your partner holds 4 cards to the 10; but if the declarer has another card of the suit to lead it is certain that the pone cannot stop the suit unless you force out the ace. Even if the declarer has all the remaining cards of the suit, your 9 must eventually win a trick if you cover with the king and force the ace; consequently, you should do so. This comes under Rule 3 (Second-Hand Play) in a general way, but belongs more especially to Rule 12. If dummy had shown the 10 also, you would not have covered, because the Q-10-7 would still dominate your 9-8-5, and your partner could not possibly win a trick. This would come under Rule 4.

Suppose jack is led up to a ragged suit in dummy like A-9-6-2, and you hold Q-8-5-4. You do not know where the K-10-7-3 lie. If pone holds the king, even as a singleton, either his king or your queen

is bound to win a trick. If declarer holds the king he may attempt to finesse the jack, or if you do not cover he may overplay with the ace and lead back to the king in his own hand. If he also holds the 10 and another he may then attempt a finesse of the 9. The chances are better than even that the pone holds either king or 10, and he may have the latter doubly guarded. If he does hold the latter combination the declarer has only one more card to lead, so that your queen will be safe. If declarer has only one more it is fairly certain that it cannot be the king, or he would have led it first. It is useless to play the queen, under all the possibilities. This is covered by the exception under Rule 2. It also comes under Rules 5, 6, and 8.

Under Rule 7 you would play the queen from K-Q-X if a low card were led up to A-J-X-X in dummy. If you were to play the king instead of the queen you would fool your partner, who would credit the declarer with holding the queen. Later on you might greatly desire entrance, but your partner, believing you did not hold command of that suit, would not lead it to you. As fooling the declarer would be useless, the queen and not the king should be played. Do not expect to fool a seasoned player with a freakish play. If you hold A-Q-X and dummy has K-J-X-X, do not expect that your play of the ace on a low lead to dummy will make the declarer believe that pone holds the queen. If you fear that the suit may not be led again before the declarer can ruff, or if you are in a hurry to re-enter, you must play the ace. To attempt to win two tricks you must play low, hoping that the declarer will misread your holding, and that

he will try to shut out the queen by playing dummy's king. As a matter of fact he will probably finesse the jack, but the chances that an expert will not do this, if you play the ace the first round, and play low the second round, are still smaller. What you should attempt depends largely upon the quality of an opponent's game.

While most of the rules relate particularly to no-trumpers, at trumps it is sometimes better to wait before playing a high card of even a plain suit. As an example, suppose you hold A-X when a small card is led up to dummy's K-J. The chances are about 80 to 1 that declarer has more of the suit. If he holds the queen and you hold back the ace on the first round, nothing is lost. If the declarer does not hold the queen and you play low, he may attempt a finesse of the jack, and your partner will win with the queen.

Another case, even at trumps, where it is ordinarily better to hold back the ace on the first round, is where any card lower than the king is led by declarer, with not less than 2 small cards in dummy. If your partner has the king he will win; if the declarer has it your ace will still be good.

As a general thing at trumps it is useless to hold back from covering an honor, especially if the dummy and yourself jointly have over 6 of a plain suit led, or if either of you will be able to ruff on the third round. There are special cases, however, where it will pay to hold back on account of what you believe partner may hold, or in the hope of later on forcing ruffs from the declarer by leading the winning cards of a plain suit. If jack (or 10) is led through your suit containing king

(or queen) with one or two low cards to dummy's A-10 (or A-J), you are often advised to cover, in order to force the ace and thus leave the queen (or king) good, if the pone holds it at least once guarded. As a matter of fact, if you do not cover and the dummy's ace is not used in overplay, your partner will win even with a singleton queen (or king). If the declarer gets cold feet at the last moment and overplays with the ace, your king will be good. When you hold either the king or queen, and the other does not show in dummy and is not led, your best chance is to wait, even if you have only a doubleton.

If a low lead comes through your Q-J to dummy's A-K-10 it depends upon circumstances whether you had better play the jack or false-card with the queen. The latter play may frighten some players into believing that you hold no more. Sharp players expect such false-carding and suspect that you also hold the jack. With them it will be safer not to false-card, since the jack will lead them to believe that you hold no more or you would false-card. Players usually fall into the rut of uniformly false-carding in such cases. You must note such players and act accordingly when playing against them. If a habitual false-carder plays the jack under above circumstances, you feel sure that he lacks the queen. Experts rarely false-card against equals, and on that account when they do so the result is apt to be favorable.

Probably the most troublesome thing to the majority of players is to know when to play the king, if they are led through by the declarer, with the A-Q and others showing in dummy, or when the queen is led and the

ace shows in dummy. The best thing ordinarily to do is to follow the general rule of playing high from 2 cards and low from more than that number. General rules 2 and 4, previously given, cover the case. If your king is singly guarded and there is a chance that pone may later be able to take a trick, you had better cover the queen; but if a low card comes through, and the ace, queen, jack and others show, it is best to hold off until the second round.

Suppose that you hold K-X-X at no trumps, a small card comes through and dummy shows A-Q-J-X-X, but lacks the 10. Some players put on the king, because they say that if the declarer has another card to lead the king must surely fall, because the ace will be led on the third round. With nine cards in sight the pone has in 100 chances 22 to hold all four missing ones, 27 to hold three, 27 to hold two, 22 to hold one, and 2 that he holds none at all. Unless he holds four he cannot save the 10. There are 22 chances in 100 that the declarer has not another card to lead, and if he has you force him to use up a re-entry card in his own hand to lead through you again if he finesses the dummy's jack on the first round. By holding back the king, if the pone has four to the 10, the only way the declarer can act is to abandon the suit or make his second lead direct from dummy, which will result in your side making both king and 10 good. At first sight it might appear that it would be useless to hold back the king, still we can see that it adds nothing to your chances to play it, and you may win an extra trick by waiting.

If the ace and small cards only appear in dummy

and the queen is led through your king, a careful analysis of what will happen with the jack and 10 variously located in the hand of declarer or pone and accompanied by varying numbers of cards shows the following general rule can be made: Cover the queen in each case except where your suit is longer than dummy's. In that case, of course, your king will be good after the ace is played.

Similarly, if you hold three or more small cards and the queen, with jack led, the king in dummy and the ace invisible, you had better cover unless you hold two more in your suit than dummy shows.

### **THIRD-HAND PLAY**

As the only cards to be played after eldest hand are exposed, third-hand play for eldest hand is very simple.

The general rule to be followed at trumps or at no trumps is to win with the lowest possible card. If unable to win, take care not to let dummy win too cheaply.

### **FOURTH-HAND PLAY**

The last play to a trick is usually to win it as cheaply as possible. As already explained, occasions arise where a trick should not be won at no trumps, but they very rarely occur at trumps.

Suppose at no trumps that dummy holds originally J-10-9-X-X-X-X clubs, and only a single outside card of re-entry. The declarer has the ace and queen only. You hold three to the king. Pone has a single club. The declarer leads the ace, followed by the

queen. If you play the king on his queen he will use dummy's card of re-entry to win 5 club tricks. By holding back the king dummy's hand becomes worth only a single trick with the card of re-entry, instead of being worth six tricks.

## PONE

Pone sits at declarer's right, and is eldest hand's partner. He is also called youngest hand or younger.

### FIRST-HAND PLAY

As pone you are under no obligations to return your partner's lead at trumps under the following conditions: if you hold winning cards in other suits; if you have high honor sequences or three honors in a different suit; if you can lead up to pronounced weakness in dummy. If your partner has bid and has then opened a different suit, it is probable that he wants a lead of his suit through the declarer.

You may find it desirable to lead a trump through declarer because dummy is very short in one of your good suits, and you want to cut down his possible ruffs. You may hold A-X of a suit wherein dummy lacks the king, and desire a ruff. In this case you play the ace, followed by your remaining card. Or you can lead back a singleton if you believe that it will enable you to ruff that suit. Where none of the above reasons exist for changing the suit you should return the opening suit, unless elder led a strengthening card to show weakness in the suit. In the latter case think

whether he can have a tenace in another suit, or a guarded single honor, to which he wants a lead. Unless a decided advantage can come through opening a new suit, it is best to lead back a winning card of the first suit, and also is usually best to do so if you believe that your partner holds its next winning card or can ruff.

In general, return your best card of your partner's suit. At no trumps be careful neither to return nor to discard the lowest card you hold of his suit unless he holds fewer of them than you do.

At no trumps it is often better to return your partner's lead, even up to dummy's major tenace (A-Q), than to open a new suit in which you hold nothing. Your only excuse for opening a new suit, provided you can return your partner's lead, is a belief that the new suit can be established more easily, or contains more tricks. If you decline to return your partner's suit you must depend upon your own resources to set up your new suit.

Use regulation leads in opening a new suit, just as eldest hand would. Avoid leads to or through an opponent's hand when he holds cards in that suit which are desirable to lead from.

In leading up to dummy's weakness lead a strengthening card if it will force the declarer to play a card higher than the exposed hand shows. Thus lead the 9 from K-9-4-3 if dummy shows 8-5, in order to force a better card from the declarer. If your partner cannot beat the 8, your lead prevents dummy's cards from winning and coming back through your hand. The strengthening 9 also prevents your partner from lead-

ing back the suit in case he should win with the jack over declarer's 10, from A-Q-10.

Study your partner's plays. If he has led an ace at no trumps and leads scientifically, he should have at least seven cards of that suit, including another honor, also re-entry. Try to detect what the other honor is. The ace lead is an urgent call to clear the way by playing your highest card, and should be heeded, unless dummy holds something like a singly guarded queen, while you have a similarly guarded king.

If you have thrown your doubleton king upon an ace led when dummy held the singleton 10, and the second lead was won by the declarer's queen, you have no more of your partner's suit, but you know that he holds the jack, and re-entry in some other suit. The first time you win a trick it is your duty to attempt to lead eldest hand's re-entry suit in preference to fooling with one of your own. His suit is now set up and good for at least 5 tricks. Look for suits with aces and kings unlocated. It cannot well be a suit of which you can locate both top honors outside your partner's hand.

Never attempt to show a suit by leading anything from it before trying to put your partner in the lead with a set-up suit, unless you can lead one of two remaining winning cards to show that you hold the other. If positive of the suit your partner wants, you had better lead both your winning cards to provide for the contingency of his having no more to lead back. Then lead the suit which he wants.

Pone, as well as eldest hand, must be careful not to

let the weak hand ruff, and must take out dummy's re-entry before he can establish a dangerous suit. Unless positive that your partner can win your return lead at no trumps, you had better lead to remove dummy's singleton ace of re-entry if he holds also a suit needing only one more lead to set it up. Of course, you merely waste time if the declarer still holds two cards in dummy's dangerous suit, or if you hold a stop to dummy's suit, so well guarded that the declarer will use up dummy's re-entry before he can establish the suit.

No-trump blocks frequently occur through forgetting that your partner's suit should be returned with the highest card which you hold of it, or through discarding low from his suit. The high-card return avoids blocking, it gives him a supporting lead, and shows him a missing high card. If you simply wish to save one or, better still, two cards of your partner's suit, to lead in case you secure re-entry before he does, almost invariably your discard of medium cards and saving the low cards will serve his purpose best. Not infrequently it happens that pone and eldest hand each hold four of the opening suit. If that occurs when you can lead to advantage to dummy's weakness, you can play your lowest card on the third round, and so win the fourth round with your highest card, in order to gain the opening lead for your new suit. Instead of wanting to lead up to dummy's weakness after running out your long suit as above, the desirable thing may be a lead through dummy's strength. In this latter case you must be careful to unblock, in order not to win the last trick of the long suit.

Eldest hand discontinues holding up a tenace if dummy possesses its intermediate card, but the reverse is true with pone—it is useless for him to hold up a tenace unless dummy holds its missing card. If eldest hand has A-Q of a suit and the king is not in the dummy, he reserves this tenace, hoping to catch the declarer's king; but if the dummy holds the king with even a single guard, it is useless to preserve the tenace, so he plays the ace whenever convenient. If pone holds A-Q he reverses this process by playing the ace if the dummy does not show the king, but refusing to open that suit if dummy has the king.

Unless hard pushed for something possible to open, do not lead up to dummy's tenace, whether you hold the intermediate card or not. Do not open up any suit in which you hold cards over dummy; let some one else open such a suit. Lead trumps, or lead a card up to dummy's ace of another suit if he has no weakness to which you can lead.

Sometimes toward the end of a suit you may hold something like 10-8-4, while dummy holds 9-7, the other two hands are void of your suit, and both are presumably able to ruff. If the declarer would kindly lead the suit to you it would be preferable, but it is your lead and nothing desirable is apparent. If you lead the 4 of the suit named, your 10 still dominates, and the declarer, being unable to place the 8 and 10, is apt to ruff very low, so that your partner can win a cheap trick. In any event, the lead has not done any harm if your partner cannot outruff the declarer.

Either if you cannot or if you realize that it is useless to lead back your partner's suit at a time when you hold

tenaces in both of the remaining plain suits, you can lead from two or three small trumps through the declarer's strength, as a sign that eldest hand can open either of the yet unplayed suits. Instead of tenaces you may hold the king and small cards of a suit where dummy holds a tenace, and in the other suit a king and small ones with the ace unplaced. If eldest hand holds the ace to one of the plain suits, upon receipt of such a signal he should lead out his ace, followed by a small card. It is possible that your signal may mean that you hold an ace of one plain suit and have no cards of the other and seek a ruff. This last use of the signal is unusual, and will cause the declarer to lead trumps, unless your partner happens to hold high cards in your void suit.

## SECOND-HAND PLAY

The pone has little opportunity to deviate from stereotyped forms of second-hand play, because third-hand cards are always concealed.

With the exception of Rule 3, the twelve rules already given under "Second-hand Play for Eldest Hand" also apply to pone's case, by making the word "declarer" read "dummy," and *vice versa*. Caution has to be employed in surmises as to what the declarer holds.

Holding a suit which demands an opening lead of an honor, cover a small card from dummy with an honor. Thus play the 10 on a low card led through these suits: A-J-10-X, K-J-10-X, Q-J-10-X, J-10-X. Remember that you always lead the top of a sequence,

but you must follow on another's lead of the suit with the lowest card of a sequence.

At trumps, precisely as if you were eldest hand, it is generally best to win your tricks as soon as possible before the suit can be ruffed. At no trumps hold back winning cards of opponents' suits as long as possible, both because it gives eldest hand a chance to make his high cards good and because it may result in using up opponents' valuable re-entry cards. If you can hold off long enough to see partner's discard it may prove valuable if you have no more of his opening suit, or if it has turned out to be hopeless, so that you seek another opening. If dummy's suit is shorter than yours, your holding off when led through often gives you an added trick, because the declarer has to lead to you instead of through you.

Declarer's lead of a suit at no trumps usually indicates that he holds several honors or many cards of it. The cards you see in dummy and in your own hand sometimes enable you to gain by a departure from a general rule.

Holding K-Q-X, on a singleton jack led from dummy it is always proper not to cover. If the declarer dares to finesse the jack, you must win one trick if you play low, and if he puts on the ace because he has a very long suit you will win two tricks. With a small lead from dummy's doubleton it is useless to cover the first lead from K-Q-X. You are sure of a trick, anyhow, and it is possible that 2 tricks may be won.

Cover even a low-card lead if you hold a fourchette over it which is lower than your best card.

In discarding on opponents' leads at no trumps always retain one card of your partner's suit, two if possible, so as to return his lead twice, except when you must unguard an honor in another suit to thus help him. Your duty lies first to your hand, and only second to his. Where only a single card can be retained a low card is more apt to meet his needs than a high one.

### THIRD-HAND PLAY

This part of the game is much more difficult for the pone than for eldest hand. The former has the declarer's concealed strength over his cards, while eldest hand plays with full information as to what dummy holds over him.

The general Whist rule of "third hand high" ordinarily governs the play. If your highest card is one of a sequence, like K-Q-J, you will play the jack. If it wins you will return the king. If that wins you will lead your queen. If your jack, from Q-J, loses to the declarer's ace, your partner will know that you hold the queen, or the declarer would have won with the queen in preference to using the ace. Should you play the queen from Q-J, your partner could not tell that you held the lower honor, and would credit its possession to the declarer.

If you hold Q-10-5 and dummy plays 9 from J-9-3, you will play the 10. Your cards and dummy's are in sequence, and you play in regulation manner the lowest card of the combined sequence. The play permits you to retain the queen over dummy's jack, and still renders your holdings perfectly clear to your

partner. If the declarer wins with the ace or king, it is self-evident in the first case that you hold the queen; but in the second case it might appear possible that the declarer is false-carding and holds the queen as well.

An absolute rule for third hand is, never finesse against a partner. This means that you must play your highest card on your partner's lead, except in two cases—*viz.*:

1. When partner leads a supporting card on the chance of striking your strong suit, or leads a suit in which you have indicated strength either by bid or discards. He is then merely trying to assist you. The suit is yours to play as you deem best.

2. When dummy shows a card impossible for your partner to catch. You can hold back a high card to prevent dummy from winning. This play aids your partner in the final establishment of his suit.

To play the queen from A-Q and others, upon a low opening card led by your partner, is not proper if dummy shows nothing. Your partner probably holds the king, and you are finessing against his hand. At trumps he might be leading a singleton. If you play the ace in such an event and return his lead, you offer him the only chance he may have to make good a small trump; but if you put up the queen the declarer will win with the king, and will probably lead trumps. Finessing against your partner's hand is one of the worst possible mistakes. Even if your finesse succeeds, it sometimes fools your partner on the location of your high card. A finesse which fails may even cause your partner to abandon a good suit because he thinks it is hopelessly against him.

At no trumps you may hold over a good card for several rounds if dummy refuses to play the honor over which you stand. At trumps it rarely pays to hold up an honor merely on account of what dummy shows, as the danger of finally losing your honor through a ruff from the declarer is too great.

Suppose that your partner leads a low card at no trumps, dummy shows only 3 small cards of the suit, and you hold K-J-X. Your partner self-evidently has not 3 honors in the suit, unless he holds less than 7 to A-Q-10, or he would have led one of them, so it is practically certain that the declarer has an honor, possibly two of them, and holds less than 4 of the suit. You should play your king, which can only lose to the ace, and if you win you should lead back the jack. If instead of doing this you play the jack on the first round, you may lose to a twice-guarded queen, which could never have won a trick had you not finessed against your partner. The loss of this one trick may lose you the rubber, while saving it and having a successful contract the next hand might have won the rubber for you. If declarer holds the ace as an only honor, the king is no worse to play than the jack. With the 10 or queen it is better. If the declarer holds two honors it will make no difference, if the two are ace and queen, as you must lose two tricks whether you play jack or king. If declarer holds A-10-X or Q-10-X it does not matter, since you and he will each win one trick. As the king can never be the poorer card to play, and in certain instances is the better card to play, a finesse of the second best cannot be justified.

So it is in all similar cases where dummy shows no strength in the suit led—the pone must play his highest card at third hand on his partner's opening low card.

If the same card is led at no trumps when pone holds K-J-X, and an honor is in dummy, what pone should do depends upon dummy's honor and its guards. Suppose that dummy has a doubly guarded honor. If it is the queen, pone must hold his king and play the jack. As already explained, this requires the ace to beat it, and consequently momentarily is the equal of the king in power. If the held-up honor is the ace or 10, pone must play his king and return his jack. Of course, the jack will lose to the ace, but it will clear the suit, and that is what the "defenders" ought to do—clear their suit before the declarer's attacks have robbed them of their re-entry cards.

At no trumps, if a small card is led and you hold K-10-3, if dummy plays 7 from Q-8-7, you will cover with the 10. If the declarer has either a guarded jack or the ace it will be impossible to prevent his winning with one hand or the other. By holding the king you are preventing the queen winning, anyway; but by playing the king the queen must win, and if the declarer holds the ace you will lose two tricks instead of one. If dummy shows one more card to the queen than you hold to the king, you should play the king on the first round and return the 10. If dummy holds Q-X-X-X, and the lead is a card which dummy cannot beat without playing the queen, and which you need not raise, you can hold the king, the second and third round playing respectively the 10 and king, so

that ultimately the queen must drop to the ace if your partner has it.

Suppose that your partner leads 8, from A-J-9-8-4, dummy shows Q-6-5-2, you hold K-10-7. By applying your rule of eleven you see that the declarer has nothing to beat it. As you hold the 7, you know that partner is neither leading a midsequence card nor a strengthening card. Consequently you "duck" by playing the 7. If the 9 follows and dummy refuses to play the queen, you overplay with the 10 and return the king. You are now unable to continue the suit, but if eldest hand can re-enter later on he can win 2 more tricks in his suit. If you play the king on the first round and return the 10 the queen can finally win a trick. If partner leads his 9 instead of his fourth-best card the situation is the same. You know that he will not lead his 9 as the top of a sequence of only two cards, unless he is leading short. As that style of lead has practically vanished, you can safely read the lead as coming from a midsequence, with partner holding the ace, the jack, or both. In any event your play is the 7, just as before.

Finesse boldly when desirable to retain a card over something in dummy which otherwise will probably win a trick. Return your partner's lead unless you have a better suit or can absolutely see that his suit must be hopeless. Apply the rule of eleven to leads lower than a 9; also see if a midsequence lead has been made.

If there is but one way to win all the tricks in a suit, you must assume that those conditions exist and play accordingly. If Q-X-X appears in dummy when

you hold A-J-X, assume that the jack will win if finessed, then lead the ace and return the small card for partner's king to win the third trick. Do not play the ace to the first round to catch the hypothetical unguarded king. If the king is there it is probably guarded, and two tricks will be lost. Even if you catch the unguarded king you will lose just as much by the queen winning a trick as if you had allowed the king to win.

If partner's lead through dummy leaves the king there when you hold only A-Q, play the queen first, then lead back the ace, whether the king is guarded or not. It is useless to hold a singleton ace over a guarded king, and by holding it you cost partner three re-entry cards to clear his suit. By leading it back you enable him to clear in 2 re-entries. Moreover, your partner may think that the declarer has the ace, and so never give you an opportunity to play it, except at your own expense of a re-entry card. If you hold only A-Q and king does not show in dummy, always play the ace first and lead back the queen. If declarer holds the king, you may possibly catch it unguarded, but the main reason is to show your partner both ace and queen. If you play the queen and the declarer captures it with the king on the first round, eldest hand thinks that he also holds the ace, and may stop the suit. In any event, the suit will be blocked twice, once by the declarer's king and once by your ace, thus costing two re-entry cards, whereas the other way it costs only a single re-entry card to clear it, provided your partner holds the other two honors, jack and 10.

For similar reasons, when dummy shows nothing necessitating the hold-up of an honor, play ace to first trick and lead back queen, even if you hold A-Q-X or A-Q-X-X.

Third-hand play for pone is less complex at trumps than at no trumps. On account of the liability of a ruff it very rarely pays to hold up a card because of what dummy may show. A card lower than your best can always be played when it is apparent from dummy's hand that it will be as efficacious as the best you hold in making declarer play high or in winning a trick. If your partner leads a very low plain card, it is presumably either a singleton or else he has one of the high honors. If dummy shows Q-X-X and does not play the queen, the declarer probably is short-suited or holds an honor. If you hold A-J only, the liability of his being short is very slight—he perhaps holds the guarded 10. In this case if you finesse the jack it will win. Leading low from a card as small as the 10 was sometimes good play at other games, but it is a poor auction lead, and you must assume that partner will not do it. If the lead is a singleton the ace will win later on. Leading away from a king is a bad blind opening, of course, but sometimes a hand affords nothing better. Later on partner may have to open a suit of three or four to a queen, with dummy's ace or king over him. To prevent your leading the suit back, unless his second-best card can beat all except dummy's top card, he will then open with an intermediate card instead of opening low.

A low-card opening lead at trumps calls for your best card, except in a very unusual case, as your part-

ner has something in his hand to which he wants a return lead.

Deliberately forcing you to ruff when you both know that declarer can outruff you is a call to use your highest trump. This is sometimes done to force so high a card from declarer that partner can later win a trick with a trump which would otherwise fall with your own on declarer's trump leads.

After trumps are exhausted the play of any suit is precisely as at no trumps.

Always keep your partner's opening lead in mind. You cannot always tell whether it is the top of a weak suit or is a fourth-best card. Make certain which it is as soon as possible, to avoid making a bad return lead.

On a jack lead overplay with the ace unless both king and queen remain in dummy. On a queen lead overplay with ace unless king remains in dummy.

Echo at trumps on a king lead if you hold ace or queen, or if you have only two of the suit, as explained under the "Third-round Call."

At no trumps carefully follow out the instructions given under "Unblocking," so as not to stand in your partner's way.

Aside from the obligation not to block your partner is the desirability to overplay or underplay on your partner's leads from a strong suit all high cards in his suit, which cannot in any way assist him. It is done to show him where they lie and encourage him to continue the suit. This is only done when your suit is the weaker.

On an ace lead, unless it is needed to catch a guarded

card in dummy's hand, throw your king or other honor, even if not possible to block. On a king lead overplay with the ace unless the doubly guarded jack or 10 appears in dummy.

On the queen lead overplay with the ace or king unless a card shows in dummy, which self-evidently the remaining card in your partner's hand cannot catch, but which yours can take. His remaining honors on a queen lead are liable to be A-J, J-10, or J-9.

On the jack lead from A-K-J, overplay with your queen unless the trebly guarded 10 shows in dummy. If the jack wins the first trick, in the latter case, your partner will credit you with holding the queen, and will let you win the second trick. Even if you block him with your short suit it will be better than being blocked by dummy later on, for you will try to lead to your partner's re-entry, while the declarer will do his best to avoid doing so. Similarly, on the jack lead from A-J-10 throw your king or queen, unless needed to keep dummy out.

Underplaying with any useless honor on an ace or king lead, or with the 10 on the queen lead, is less commonly observed than overplaying by even good players, but in reality this does much to smooth a partner's path.

If dummy is void of partner's suit or even very short, care must be exercised at no trumps in assuming that high cards of partner's suit are useless to hold. If you and dummy jointly have only four of partner's suit the declarer may have five. While it will seldom profit to deliberately block partner by assuming that otherwise the declarer will win a trick, it will frequently

pay you to play your second-best card instead of your best one on partner's honor leads, whenever declarer may be long in partner's suit. When partner sees that dummy is very short, his next lead will be a low card to enable you to win the trick and return his lead.

To properly meet emergencies it is very important that partner should strictly follow the system of leads already given, especially at no trumps. This is noticeably so on ace leads. These should always show another honor (except the king) with 7 or more in suit and re-entry. Never use it in any other way as a blind lead. The king must be led instead of the ace where both ace and king are held, regardless of the extreme length of the suit. The queen is similarly led from A-Q-J and jack from A-J-10. That leaves the only combinations from which the ace can come: A-Q-10, A-Q, A-J, and A-10. Partner will hold a 7-card suit more than 7 times as frequently as an 8-card suit. Therefore the ace lead must always be assumed as showing just seven cards of a suit. Your cards and dummy's show the probable number held by declarer. Note also from your honors and dummy's the probable honor held by declarer. If you jointly hold king and jack, declarer may have either the queen, the 10, or none. If you can see only the king, you know that the declarer may hold the jack alone or he may have any two out of Q-J-10. If you do not see the king, it must lie with declarer. And so on. The adverse guarded king will surely block partner's suit. Play your cards on the assumption that no block will occur beyond what you assume is held against you.

If you and dummy jointly hold four of the suit, the declarer can have only two. If dummy holds the guarded queen you must hold back a doubleton king. If dummy holds a lower doubleton honor than the queen you must throw your doubleton king under the ace and assume that partner holds the queen. If you hold three to the king or queen, and dummy holds none, you must play your second-best card on the ace, hoping for a low lead next time.

On the lead of a high-winning card at trumps, in cases not coming under the third-round call, play as low as possible if you do not want the suit continued, as 3 from 10-8-3. If you do want the suit continued, play high, if you consistently can, so that eldest hand can see that either you can ruff or hold the next winning card, as 9 from K-9-2 when partner leads the ace.

#### **FOURTH-HAND PLAY**

The pone's play at fourth hand is similar to that of eldest hand, playing a winning card, in case the trick would otherwise be lost, unless he can gain an advantage by holding up.

## DECLARER

The declarer is the player who has been awarded the contract, because his side has outbid the other side, and because he first made the call at which the hand must be played.

To play well as declarer you must first know how to play in the side positions, so that proper deductions can be drawn from what each adversary does.

The declarer can read each bid as readily as an opponent can. Signals and discards must be noted by him, to locate strength and weakness in each suit. Unblocking, finessing, false-carding, hesitation, or unnatural readiness in playing, looks of satisfaction or of disappointment, are all indicative of what an adversary holds.

The rules for the guidance of eldest hand's and pone's play also apply to that of the declarer, with such modifications as his perfect knowledge of both his hands permits.

After dummy's cards have been boarded, give a few moments' concentrated thought to the possibilities disclosed by the joint cards of your two hands. Note established and establishable suits, re-entry cards, or where re-entry must be provided. Think over the opposing bids. Determine which hand shall lead each

strong suit and where chances to finesse exist. If playing at trumps, decide on your style of game. What tricks probably must be lost with each game variation in sight? What tricks can you surely win? Can you make a slam, or must you stop at game, or will it be a hard fight to win your contract?

The way a declarer handles his trumps is usually a good index to his ability as a player. While it is generally best to lead trumps, a choice sometimes exists among the following three general courses of action:

1. Exhaust adverse trumps and bring in a long suit.
2. Trump adversaries' long suits and use his long suits to force the defenders.
3. Establish a cross-ruff.

Holding an established side suit, you should try to exhaust trumps before opening it. If adverse trump strength is too great to allow this to be done, you can try leading your established suit to "force" your strong opponent (make him trump). It often happens that you and an opponent will each hold 5 trumps. Then the one securing the first force on the other will probably gain the long trump. To prevent your weaker opponent from trumping you may have to lead trumps a few times before venturing the force.

When dummy has an established suit and is able to ruff adversaries' long suits with a few low trumps, and you hold very little aside from four trump honors, with several low cards of dummy's suit, it is not improbable that if you lead trumps an adverse long trump will ruff dummy's long suit and permit your adversaries to lead their long suits unchecked. The

best course may then be to lead dummy's long suit and let them ruff it, utilizing his two or three small trumps to ruff their long suits. This will reduce adverse trump strength to a point where you hold the long trump. You then lead trumps, and afterward allow dummy to continue with his long suit. The same plan may be workable if you have a few very high trump cards and a set-up suit, if dummy can ruff a long-established suit of the side players. Quite likely your opponents will start leading trumps on their first ruff, or one of them may cease leading his long suit and lead trumps to prevent dummy from ruffing. Even if confident that your opponents will not permit you to treat them as beginners, you must try your best plan, whatever it may be. Sometimes the best players fall into childish simple traps.

With plenty of trumps exhaust those opposed to you before trying to set up a suit. If trumps are rather scarce, try to set up the suit before leading trumps. A force or two will reduce adverse trump strength to a point where you can handle it.

Having 4 trumps in your hand, with 3 trumps in dummy's, their denominations often determine whether or not they shall be led. Four top honors is a powerful reason for leading trumps, unless you face established suits in adversaries' hands. Sometimes a tactical bid leaves you a declaration you do not want. Trumps like K-Q-J-X, A-Q-J-X, Q-J-10-X, A-J-10-X, A-Q-10-X in one hand, and three small trumps in the other hand, give good grounds to consider whether some other method will not win more tricks than leading out trumps.

An excellent reason for not leading trumps occurs when the weak hand can ruff a suit of which the strong hand holds only small cards. Better still is the opportunity to ruff with the weak hand and to discard from a low suit held by the strong hand.

With abundant trumps and a strong side suit lead trumps at once, even if the weak hand can ruff something else.

The only excuse for unnecessarily ruffing from the strong hand is either a superabundance of trumps or an established cross-ruff. You can calculate upon sparing one trump for ruffing, without leaving the long trump in your adversaries' hands, if you hold 4 trumps in each hand you play, or five in one hand and two in the other, or with six in one hand and none in the other. With fewer trumps than these a force is better than a ruff.

Even if short of trumps it is usually better to ruff than to let a long suit run unchecked. Merely wait until you have made re-entry difficult because one adversary has no more of the other's long suit.

Always apply the rule of eleven to fourth-best leads at no trumps. Also watch for midsequence leads, and even for short leads.

At no trumps a good general rule for the declarer is to lose tricks which must surely be lost early, while he has good guards about his suits.

If the declarer has guards in all suits, he can try to establish one or more of them before he plays out an established suit. When it will be difficult to establish a suit, if he holds one already established, he can lead that one first, to benefit by his adversaries' discards.

The object in being able to lead out two established suits is utterly to crush adverse strength in the remaining suits.

The expert enjoys and the novice most dreads playing the joint hands of declarer and dummy. Knowing precisely the resources and weak points on his side, he can direct his game with an assurance which is impossible for his adversaries. His offensive tactics of first and third hands do not clash, while the defensive play of second or of fourth hand is not upset by a misunderstanding.

To offset his adversaries' single advantage, of being able to lead through the strength of his exposed hand and up to its weakness, he can throw the lead from one hand to the other, so that he can lead from the weaker hand to the stronger on every suit as long as re-entry lasts.

The principal object in leading trumps is to prevent ruffs. Winning tricks over smaller trumps is a secondary matter.

If you have 4 trumps and dummy has 3, you have only 1 in 3 chances to hold a long trump. If you have only 4 trumps and dummy holds less than 3, it is quite useless to lead trumps.

Holding 8 trumps, four in each hand, 68 in 89 times you can depend upon neither adversary holding over 3 trumps.

Holding 6 trumps, 5 in one hand and 1 in the other, 5 in 8 times you will find the adversaries' trumps divided 4 in one hand and 3 in the other. With 5 trumps in one hand and none in the other you have only 1 in 3 chances to hold a long trump.

With 6 trumps in one hand and none in the other you can calculate upon having 2 long trumps 7 in 11 times.

It is good policy to draw two trumps from opponents to your one, when both of them have trumps and your partner has none. It is bad to reverse the process and waste two trumps to draw one, unless you are very strong in trumps. Rarely waste two trumps to draw the remaining winning trump. Try to force it and to make your remaining trumps separately by ruffing. If you have a good suit to lead, you can utilize the trump in one hand to ruff a weak suit; then if you have re-entry, lead the other trump to draw out the winning trump from your adversary.

It is better to make a helpful discard than to over-trump, when doing so puts a winning trump in your adversaries' hands.

When you and an adversary have an equal number of trumps left you can lead them if they are winning cards and if you have an established suit. Otherwise your best plan is to force him to ruff, so as to give you the long trump.

When left with several winning trumps or winning cards of any suit and one losing card of a plain suit, lead out all the winning cards first. Many times your adversaries will discard so that your last card will also win.

At trumps the leader of a king can often be scared away from leading more of your long low suit by throwing under his king your highest card, as if you could ruff it on the next round. Expert players are not very apt to be caught by such tricks, neither are players of

very small experience, but similar strategy can be employed against the great majority of ordinary players with fair success.

Remember not to block the run of your trump suit, ruffing or leading high enough to avoid this. A temporary block may give an adversary a chance to ruff with a losing trump.

Almost any declarer can play a winning game at no trumps with strong cards and both hands guarded in all four suits. Even fair players are, however, apt to miss a trick or two with such hands because they appear so simple. They will use high cards in adversaries' suits which should be employed only for re-entry and to stop the run of opposing suits to win tricks early in the game. Or they will run out a moderately long suit and leave adversaries a long card or two, when they might just as well have established and run out a longer suit to force discards. These would be full of information, as well as weakening to opposing hands. Skill in playing at no trumps consists to a great extent of winning tricks with small cards of a long suit and of forcing adversaries either to unguard high cards in suits where the strength is divided or to discard from their strong suits. This preventing adversaries bringing in their long suits before discards have weakened them is very important; so, also, is refusing to play a commanding card of their long suit until one of their hands can no longer lead that suit. This gives one hand against which finesses can be directed without fear that an established long suit will be led against you. At least, without costing adversaries a valuable re-entry card of another suit.

The bids assist greatly in locating adverse strength and in determining its general character. Stops to the run of your own suit must be removed, as also must re-entry cards of adversaries, while unblocking and insuring re-entry in the weak hand must be most carefully observed. At trumps, reserving a trump in the weak hand often provides the best possible (perhaps only possible) re-entry card; so at no trumps a higher card of your established suit retained in the weak hand and a lower one in the strong hand may prove your best means of re-entry, after all opposing cards of that suit have been played. This feature is always worthy of consideration, instead of blindly playing out the very last cards of a suit.

In reviewing the joint cards of dummy and himself the declarer will ordinarily select as the suit for his no-trump attack the one containing the greatest number of cards. Of two suits equal in other respects, select the one in which dummy shows the greatest strength, since the adversaries will more zealously protect their high cards in this suit than they will the one in which you hold concealed strength. In defending themselves from the attack of dummy's suit they are apt to unguard high cards in your concealed suit and thus give you a chance readily to establish it after the first suit has been exhausted.

Other things being equal, it is self-evident that a total of 8 cards divided equally between your hand and dummy's is less effective than the same cards divided 5 and 3, or 6 and 2, because 5 or 6 leads of a suit will necessitate the adversaries sacrificing more through discards than 4 leads will. Moreover, a total of 7

cards, divided 6 and 1 between your two hands, is better than 8 (containing the same honors) divided evenly, or in the ratio of 5 to 3 between dummy and declarer.

It is often better to try to establish an inferior suit than to continue with the first one tried when great strength in that suit is concentrated in the hand over you.

Second and fourth hand plays for the declarer are much simpler than for the other two players. There is no unnecessary sacrifice of two high cards on a single trick, such as frequently occurs with the defenders. Where, for example, eldest hand will play the queen from three on the 10 led by the declarer, because dummy shows nothing, and the pone wins with his singleton ace.

Playing two hands gives the declarer a chance to save a high card in his weak hand for re-entry when he can as cheaply win from his own hand. With Q-X-X in dummy and A-J-X-X in your own hand do not try to win with the queen; use either jack or ace.

Do not risk a high card at second hand, unless you are strong in the suit, if you are liable to be called upon to overplay at fourth hand. At no trumps you must play the king from two at second hand if fourth hand has nothing; but this comes under the general heading of making a poorly guarded honor good when possible. Moreover, you are *not* "liable to be called upon to overplay at fourth hand." With J-X-X-X in dummy do not play jack on 10 led when you hold K-X-X in your own hand. If the 10 surely came from A-Q-10 it

would be all right to do so, but it would be a miserable opening with less than 7 in suit, and more probably it is the top of a sequence unless you can see the 9 or 8. If you can see the 8 without the 9 the 10 is probably a midsequence lead. In any event, playing low on the 10 probably saves your jack from pone's ace or queen and you must eventually win two tricks in the suit unless a short lead has been made.

If you can win two tricks in an adversary's suit, it is ordinarily better to win the second and third, or the first and third, rather than the first two tricks. If it is apparent that the leader's partner will have none of the suit to lead back after the second round, it will be best to win the first and second rounds, and chance that suit being led again. Unless declarer and dummy jointly hold seven you cannot be certain of that fact. If you hold A-Q-X and dummy holds less than 4 small cards, it will be wise to win the first trick with the queen from pone on a lead from your left, then to hold the ace until the third round. You cannot let the first trick go to pone (unless he wins with the king) and permit him to lead through your hand up to eldest hand's king. Even if eldest hand will win the first trick, it is somewhat dangerous to let him do so if you have a weak suit, because he might change to that suit and wait for a lead to come through your tenace. If instead of A-Q-X you should hold A-K-X, it would be best to pass the first trick, with less than seven of the suit between you and dummy.

Holding up a commanding card of an adversary's suit until one player can no longer lead that suit gives you only one instead of two hands to fear. A general

rule is that it will pay to hold up twice if it pays to hold up the first round. If an adversary holds up an ace too long the declarer may avoid leading that suit, but the declarer can usually hold up a winning card as long as he chooses. Holding up a winning card in each hand, care must be taken finally to play them in a way to bring your own lead from the desired direction.

With ace of an adversary's strong suit in one hand and king in the other, like A-X-X and K-X-X, after the first round there will remain against you only five of that suit. If you pass the first round and win the second and third rounds, the suit will probably never be heard from again, so that it often pays to hold up two stops to a strong suit instead of one.

Weakly guarded honors, like Q-X-X, J-X-X-X, should be allowed to make when they can.

Make your discards as enigmatical as possible. Decide where the next attack is to come, and hide extreme weakness in a suit by discarding from a stronger one. Do not discard from the same suit in both hands unless that suit is so strong that you can well spare the cards. When one hand has a suit well guarded, that suit can be discarded from the other hand. In this way you can ordinarily guard one suit in each hand by allowing one hand to discard from the suit the other guards. With hearts being led after your side has no more, when

|                    | <i>Spades</i> | <i>Diamonds</i> | <i>Clubs</i> |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| declarer has left  | X-X-X-X       | A-K-X           | A-Q-X        |
| and dummy has left | K-Q-X         | J-X-X-X         | X-X-X        |

the declarer can discard spades while dummy discards clubs.

With two entire suits against you, the lead must not be lost until you have won all you can. With only a single suit against you, an attempt must be made to establish your best suit. Holding a second stop to the opening suit entitles you to take chances not otherwise warranted.

A suit with an adverse ace is much better to open than one having both king and queen against you. The ace is almost certain to win sometime, but by postponing opening the last-named suit it is possible that discards may cause both king and queen to fall together, or one of them to fall to your ace.

Bad suits for the declarer to open, unless they are very long, are those having a single honor in each hand. If they are ace and king, they should be saved for valuable re-entry; otherwise than ace and king the suits are too weak to open. King or queen with small supporting cards in one hand, and jack or 10 with smaller ones in the other hand, are extremely bad suits to open.

Long suits in one hand from which ace, king, or queen would naturally be led on the blind lead, with some support in the other hand, are always admirable suits to open at no trumps. The best suit, of course, is a long, fully established suit which insures helpful discards.

Most games are won through two things: having the cards, and not missing obvious things. Only at rare intervals does a brilliant coup win a game which otherwise would be lost. Lots of games are lost, on

the other hand, by undue risks taken in the attempt to pull off a smart play, and still more are lost by failure to follow the fall of the cards.

If a finesse is attempted on the first round of an unbid suit which you open, it has even chances of success; but if deferred until the second round its chances average better, because of information given by the cards played on the first round; singleton stops are also eliminated. A little plain common sense will also help to direct a finesse properly. If eldest hand has shown considerable strength in his suit and the declarer finds that a finesse must be chanced in one or two other suits, the law of averages indicates that the pone is more apt to hold the missing strength in those suits than eldest hand. Accordingly, a finesse through the pone should be tried.

Finessing is one of the most obvious methods of winning extra tricks and of bringing out missing strength. A common trait of most players is to let small cards of a sequence slip past their top card; but few can resist covering the card immediately below the one they hold. If you have a sequence Q-J-10-9 and the player on your left holds the guarded king, he will probably let the 9 or 10 slip past him and win tricks. He may pass the jack, but unless he is a seasoned player he will be almost certain to cover the queen, regardless of the utility of such a play.

Play a high card to dislodge a high obstructing card, and play a low one if you want it to slip past a guard. You can often take advantage of this, for example: you hold A-K-X, dummy has J-X-X; with the 10 missing you cannot afford to lead jack from dummy,

so you lead a small card toward the jack. If eldest hand has the missing queen guarded, he may let your jack win. In any event the attempt costs nothing, and it may possibly cause his queen to later fall to your ace or king.

There are times to risk much on a finesse and times to prefer a certain small loss to risking a finesse at all. Always consider what you have to gain by a successful finesse, and the possible extent of your loss if the finesse fails.

If you intend leading trumps, always do so before risking a finesse in a plain suit. If a finesse goes wrong, it may mean a dangerous lead from the winner, a ruff by his partner, or, perhaps, even a cross-ruff may be started.

Risk a finesse to win the game if its miscarriage cannot badly "set" you. As winning the game means so much more than a lower score, it is usually best to risk being set one undoubled trick, or even two, if a successful finesse will win the game. If possible to win the contract by refusing all finesses, it is better to accept that than to risk two finesses, which will win the game if both are successful, but which will lose the contract if either fails.

With other things equal, direct finesses against the stronger adversary, but do not take a finesse on the side from which a disadvantageous lead can come if you lose. Do not unnecessarily risk losing to an adversary holding a suit which you are not prepared to stop.

When contemplating a finesse you must usually assume that opposing length in that suit is divided equally between opponents. With 3 cards missing, assume

them distributed 2 and 1; with 4 cards, 2 and 2; with 5 cards, 3 and 2; and so on. If you hold a total of 9 cards of a suit, with both ace and king in one hand, do not strain a point by using up valuable re-entry to lead toward your high cards, but go "head-on" with your high cards to try to catch the missing queen. With seven to A-K-Q in your two hands you will win more tricks by trying to drop the jack by direct leads than by finessing. If you hold eight cards in both hands, and lack only the queen, you can attempt a finesse on the second round, if it can be arranged without seriously impairing dummy's further efficiency. If it cannot be so arranged, try to drop the queen by direct leads of ace and king. Never sacrifice a future certain advantage for a present doubtful one.

Without special reasons for other play, the following frequently recurring combinations should be played as given:

| Holding<br>in<br>one hand | With these<br>in the<br>other hand | Lead | Unless second hand<br>outplays the card<br>given below play |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| X-X-X                     | A-Q-10                             | X    | 10                                                          |
| J-10-X                    | A-Q-X                              | J    | X                                                           |
| X-X-X                     | A-Q-X                              | X    | Q                                                           |
| A-X-X                     | Q-X-X                              | X    | Q                                                           |
| K-X-X                     | A-J-X                              | X    | J                                                           |
| X-X-X                     | A-J-X                              | X    | J                                                           |
| 10-X                      | A-J-X-X                            | 10   | X                                                           |
| A-J-X                     | 10-X                               | X    | 10                                                          |
| Q-X-X                     | A-J-X-X                            | X    | J                                                           |

[In order to save the queen for re-entry. If that is unnecessary the queen can be led.]

A-10-X-X    K-J-X-X    { X    or    K  
                                          { X                    A

[Then reverse the process and lead a low card back to the other top card.]

|       |          |   |    |
|-------|----------|---|----|
| A-X-X | Q-J-10-X | X | 10 |
|-------|----------|---|----|

[If re-entry is scarce. Otherwise can lead Q up to A.]

|         |           |   |   |
|---------|-----------|---|---|
| Q-J-X   | A-X-X-X   | Q | X |
| A-X-X-X | J-X-X     | X | J |
| X-X-X   | A-X-X-X-X | X | X |

[Repeat this; on third round play ace, and you may hope to win three tricks in the suit.]

|         |          |   |    |
|---------|----------|---|----|
| K-X-X-X | J-X-X    | X | J  |
| X-X-X   | K-Q-X    | X | Q  |
| X-X-X   | Q-J-10-X | X | 10 |

Do not lead a high card to finesse it unless you hold its equal in the other hand.

Sometimes a lead of a low card must be followed by the play of a low card, even when you hold in third hand the best card, in order to provide re-entry for a suit which you cannot depend on clearing with the number of winning cards it holds. Say that dummy has no card capable of winning a trick except in a suit of seven to the ace, wherein you hold three to the jack, with only the king, queen, and one small card against you. No matter how the cards lie, you must lose at least one trick, consequently it will be best to lead a small card and play a small card from dummy, regardless of what second hand plays. The second time you are able to lead the suit the jack must be led. If the suit clears this round, go up with the ace; otherwise the ace must be reserved for the third round. Similar tactics would be necessary with five cards, including an honor, out against dummy's suit of five or six cards to A-K.

Remember to leave re-entry in the hand where the long suit lies, or to so direct your play as to establish re-entry there. Holding K-Q-X in your own hand,

with J-X-X-X in dummy, or even J-X-X, by leading out the king and queen you will usually be able to force out the ace and make a re-entry card of the jack. With A-K-Q-5 in your own hand and 6-4-3-2 in dummy, you can probably make a re-entry card of his 6 by leading out the three honors to clear the suit.

The rule to look out for re-entry is necessitated by the need of establishing a long suit as soon as possible to lead out and break up opposing strength through discards, also to enable leads to be made through strength. To provide re-entry and not to block himself the declarer must carefully count the cards of his long suit as they fall, unblocking, overtaking, and ducking as necessity may require.

Forcing, whether in the form of making an adversary ruff your long suit at trumps or in the form of making him discard from his long suit at no trumps, is an effective method of attacking a powerful adversary.

Take all possible advantage of your adversaries' mannerisms, and of their peculiarities of play, to locate cards. Some adversaries show by their hesitation in deciding what to play that they hold a certain card. While you would have no right to take the slightest advantage of disclosures made by your partner, you have every right to make use of those of adversaries, since the etiquette of the game is sternly against them.

Leading a suit which of all others you least desire led will sometimes bluff an adversary and prevent his returning the suit if its strength happens to be evenly divided between the defenders.

Most players cannot resist covering a high card, consequently lead high to pull out high stops to your

suit. With only three cards against you, including ace and king, it is possible that the lead of your queen will cause both the higher honors to fall at once, if fourth hand has only a singleton honor.

Do your thinking (if necessary, after the opening lead) when adversaries lead up to your strength. When you do not want to disclose anything you hold in a weak suit, play with your ordinary appearance of confidence. It is true that a quick movement in playing often provokes a hasty play in return, sometimes to your advantage, but such purposely deceptive actions closely approach trickery. Try to maintain the same confident air whether or not you feel so, and always play your cards in one style. Mannerisms should neither be allowed to deceive opponents nor to enlighten a partner.

With a weak hand you are more apt to make high cards good when the other side leads. The more suits they open up at no trumps the better it will be for you. If they will assist you in clearing a suit, it is to your advantage. There are occasions when it is so desirable to have a special suit led by a certain player that it pays to lead out the last losing card of another suit, if you know that he holds its last winning card, in the hope that he will open up that special suit for you. This may happen when you hold only short tenace suits, and need to make both cards of a tenace good to win your contract. You will naturally have to lose the last card referred to, anyway.

At the end of the game you may have to lead when you hold cards like 10-8 clubs and 6-3 hearts, and an adversary holds 9-7-6 clubs and 10 hearts, while his

partner and the dummy hold only spades and diamonds. If you lead a club you will win only one trick, while he will win three; but if you lead a heart he will win only with his ten hearts while you must win three tricks. This shows the utility of knowing just what is out against you, where it lies, and thinking carefully before you play the few last cards.

Desiring the other side to lead trumps, you can usually accomplish this by a lead from dummy's short suit, if he shows only a few small trumps, as if you intend to start ruffing.

With two winning cards of a suit in one hand and a third in the other hand, the balance of the hand will be better preserved by winning from the hand holding the two high cards, except in a case where you want both winning cards in the weak hand for re-entry purposes.

With a single winning card in each hand, win from the hand less in need of re-entry cards. If there is no choice, win from the exposed hand to lead each adversary to believe that his partner holds the high card which is concealed in your own hand.

False-carding by the declarer, if well conceived, often misleads an adversary into leading a suit desired, or prevents his playing a winning card under the impression that his partner can win a trick at fourth hand. It is senseless to false-card in cases where nothing is to be gained. Habitually leading from the bottom of a sequence or playing its top card soon becomes known to all with whom you play; thus, the utility of a very useful bit of false-carding is gone. Vary the deception by sometimes leading or playing the middle card of

a sequence; when nothing can possibly be gained by the deception, play the cards of a sequence as if you were a side player.

No useful purpose comes from false-carding dummy's cards, except in rare cases where they are in sequence with your own.

On a fourth-best lead the pone knows whether declarer can beat the card led; so in a case where you cannot beat it do not play low out of dummy and expect the pone to go unnecessarily high.

Every text-book tells you that on a queen lead you should win with the king, instead of false-carding with the ace. The lead cannot possibly be from K-Q and others, but it might be from A-Q-J. The leader will usually know that you hold the ace, but his partner cannot tell who holds it. In addition to this repeatedly cited case, there are other equally good opportunities to puzzle an adversary on an honor led by his partner.

If jack is led at no trumps, it may come from a suit headed by A-K-J, A-J-10, K-J-10, or J-10-9. Holding ace, king, and queen in his own hand, the declarer can win with the queen instead of false-carding. This will not tell pone that the ace and king are also held, and he is liable to return the lead at the first opportunity, under the impression that eldest hand has the ace, the king, or both. If queen lies in dummy when declarer holds both ace and king, the same impression will be given pone by winning with the queen from dummy.

If declarer holds A-K-J in his own hand when the 10 is led and overplayed by pone's queen, if he plays the king, pone may think his partner is leading from

seven to A-10, with re-entry, if the declarer has enough cards to deceive the pone. Or pone is likely to think that the 10 is a midsequence lead, and that eldest hand has one of the high honors which declarer holds. The same deception can be practised by false-carding with the ace instead of the king. By false-carding with the ace on pone's third-hand play of the queen, with 10 and jack anywhere, he can lead eldest hand to believe that pone holds the king.

To false-card with an honor quickly and to deceive an adversary, the declarer must have all the leads fixed clearly in mind. False-carding with lower cards is useless against ordinary players, but often very deceptive to good players.

# THE LAWS OF AUCTION

TOGETHER WITH THE

## ETIQUETTE OF THE GAME

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## PREFACE

At a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Whist Club the following laws applicable to Auction were approved and adopted, to become effective January 1, 1917.

THE WHIST CLUB.

*NEW YORK, November, 1916.*



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# THE LAWS OF AUCTION

## THE RUBBER

1. A rubber continues until one side wins it by winning two games. When the first two games decide the rubber, a third is not played.

## SCORING

2. Each side has a trick score and a score for all other counts, generally known as the honor score. In the trick score the only entires made are points for tricks won (see Law 3), which count both toward the game and in the total of the rubber.

All other points, including those scored for honors, penalties, slam, little slam, and undertricks, are recorded in the honor score, which counts only in the total of the rubber.

3. When the declarer wins the number of tricks bid or more, each above six<sup>1</sup> counts on the trick score: six points when clubs are trumps, seven when diamonds are trumps, eight when hearts are trumps, nine when spades are trumps, and ten when the declaration is no trump.

4. A game consists of thirty points made by tricks alone. Every deal is played out, whether or not during

<sup>1</sup> Such tricks are generally called "odd tricks."

it the game be concluded, and any points made (even if in excess of thirty) are counted.

5. The ace, king, queen, knave, and ten of the trump suit are the honors; when no trump is declared, the aces are the honors.

6. Honors are credited to the original holders; they are valued as follows:

| WHEN A TRUMP IS DECLARED  |                                   |                |    |        |   |   |     |   |  |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----|--------|---|---|-----|---|--|
| 3 <sup>1</sup>            | honors held between partners      | equal value of | 2  | tricks |   |   |     |   |  |
| 4                         | " " " " " "                       |                |    |        |   |   | 4   | " |  |
| 5                         | " " " " " "                       |                |    |        |   |   | 5   | " |  |
| 4                         | " in 1 hand                       |                |    |        | " | " | 8   | " |  |
| 4                         | " " 1 " { 5th in partner's hand } |                |    |        | " | " | 9   | " |  |
| 5                         | " " 1 " " "                       |                |    |        | " | " | 10  | " |  |
| WHEN NO TRUMP IS DECLARED |                                   |                |    |        |   |   |     |   |  |
| 3                         | aces held between partners        | count          | 30 |        |   |   |     |   |  |
| 4                         | " " " " " "                       |                |    |        |   |   | 40  |   |  |
| 4                         | " " in one hand                   |                |    |        | " |   | 100 |   |  |

7. Slam is made when partners take thirteen tricks.<sup>2</sup> It counts 100 points in the honor score.

8. Little slam is made when partners take twelve tricks.<sup>3</sup> It counts 50 points in the honor score.

<sup>1</sup> Frequently called "simple honors."

<sup>2</sup> Law 84 prohibits a revoking side from scoring slam, and provides that tricks received by the declarer as penalty for a revoke shall not entitle him to a slam not otherwise obtained.

<sup>3</sup> Law 84 prohibits a revoking side from scoring little slam, and provides that tricks received by the declarer as penalty for a revoke shall not entitle him to a little slam not otherwise obtained. When a declarer bids 7 and takes twelve tricks he counts 50 for little slam, although his declaration fails.

9. The value of honors, slam, or little slam is not affected by doubling or redoubling.

10. At the end of a rubber the winners score 250 points additional.

The trick, honor, and bonus scores of each side are then added and the size of the rubber is the difference between the respective totals.

The losers of the rubber are entitled to the difference when they have the larger total.

11. When a rubber is started with the agreement that the play shall terminate (*i.e.*, no new deal shall commence) at a specified time, and the rubber is unfinished at that hour, the score is made up as it stands, 125 being added to the score of the winners of a game. A deal if started must be played out.

11a. If a rubber be started without any agreement as to its termination and before its conclusion one player leaves without appointing an acceptable substitute (see Law 26), his adversaries have the right to elect whether the score be canceled or counted as if covered by Law 11.

12. A proved error in the honor score may be corrected at any time before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed upon.

13. A proved error in the trick score may be corrected at any time before a declaration has been made in the following game, or, if it occur in the final game of the rubber, before the score has been made up and agreed upon.

### CUTTING

14. In cutting, the ace is the lowest, the king the highest card; between cards of otherwise equal value

the spade is the lowest, the heart next, the diamond next, and the club the highest.

15. Every player must cut from the same pack.

16. Should a player expose more than one card, the highest is his cut, except as provided for in Law 19.

### FORMING TABLES

17. Those first in the room have the prior right to play. Candidates of equal standing decide their order by cutting; those who cut lowest play first.

18. Six players constitute a complete table.

19. After the table has been formed, the players cut to decide upon partners, the two lower play against the two higher. In cutting for partners, should a player expose more than one card he must cut again. The lowest is the dealer, who has choice of cards and seats, and, having made his selection, must abide by it.<sup>1</sup>

20. The right to succeed players as they retire is acquired by announcing the desire to do so, and such announcements, in the order made, entitle candidates to places as vacancies occur.

### CUTTING OUT

21. If, at the end of a rubber, admission be claimed by one or two candidates, the player or players who have played the greatest number of consecutive rubbers withdraw; when more players than there are

<sup>1</sup> He may consult his partner before making his decision.

candidates have played the same number, the outgoers are decided by cutting; the highest are out.<sup>1</sup>

### RIGHT OF ENTRY

22. At the beginning of a rubber a candidate is not entitled to enter a table unless he declare his intention before any player cut, either for partners, for a new rubber, or for cutting out.

23. In the formation of new tables candidates who have not played at an existing table have the prior right of entry. Others determine their right to admission by cutting.

24. When one or more players belonging to an existing table aid in making up a new one, which cannot be formed without him or them, he or they shall be the last to cut out.

25. A player belonging to one table who enters another, or announces a desire to do so, forfeits his rights at his original table, unless the new table cannot be formed without him, in which case he may retain his position at his original table by announcing his intention to return as soon as his place at the new table can be filled.

26. Should a player leave a table during the progress of a rubber, he may, with the consent of the three others, appoint a substitute to play during his absence; but such appointment becomes void upon the conclusion of the rubber, and does not in any way affect the rights of the substitute.

27. If a player break up a table, the others have a prior right of entry elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> See Law 14 as to value of cards in cutting.

## SHUFFLING

28. The pack must not be shuffled below the table nor so the face of any card be seen.

29. The dealer's partner must collect and shuffle the cards from the preceding deal. He must then place them face downward to the left of the next dealer, where they must remain untouched until the end of the current deal.

30. At the conclusion of the deal the next dealer has the right to shuffle his pack, but should a card or cards be seen during his shuffling or while the pack is being cut, he must reshuffle.<sup>1</sup>

## THE DEAL

31. Players deal in turn; the order of dealing is to the left.

32. Immediately before the deal, the player on the dealer's right cuts, so that each packet contains at least four cards. When in or after cutting, and prior to the beginning of the deal, a card is exposed, or when any doubt exists as to the place of the cut, the dealer must reshuffle and the same player must cut again.

33. After the pack has been properly cut, it should not be reshuffled or recut except as provided in Law 32.

34. Should the dealer shuffle after the cut, his adversaries may subsequently shuffle and the pack must be cut again.

35. The fifty-two cards must be dealt face downward. The deal is completed when the last card is dealt.

<sup>1</sup> The dealer has the right to shuffle last except in the case covered by Law 34.

36. In the event of a misdeal, the same pack must be dealt again by the same player.

### A NEW DEAL

37. There *must* be a new deal:

- (a) If the cards be not dealt, beginning at the dealer's left, into four packets, one at a time and in regular rotation.
- (b) If, during a deal, or during the play, the pack be proved incorrect.<sup>1</sup>
- (c) If, during a deal, any card be faced in the pack or exposed, on, above, or below the table.
- (d) If more than thirteen cards be dealt to any player.<sup>2</sup>
- (e) If the last card do not come in its regular order to the dealer.
- (f) If the dealer omit having the pack cut, deal out of turn or with the adversaries' cards, and either adversary call attention to the fact before the end of the deal and before looking at any of his cards.
- (g) If, before, during, or at the conclusion of the play one player hold more than the proper number of cards and another less.

38. Should a correction of any offense mentioned in 37f not be made in time, or should an adversary who has looked at any of his cards be the first to call attention to the error, the deal stands, and the game proceeds as if the deal had been correct, the player to the left dealing next. When the deal has been with the wrong cards, the next dealer when it is his turn to deal may take whichever pack he prefers.

<sup>1</sup> A correct pack contains fifty-two cards divided into four suits of thirteen cards each, each suit containing one card of each denomination.

<sup>2</sup> This error, whenever discovered, renders a new deal necessary.

39. If, prior to the cut for the following deal, a pack be proved incorrect, the deal is void, but all prior scores stand.

The pack is not incorrect when a missing card or cards are found in the other pack, among the quitted tricks, below the table, or in any other place which makes it possible that such card or cards were part of the pack during the deal.

40. Should three players have their proper number of cards, the fourth, less, the missing card or cards, if found, belong to him, and he, unless dummy, is answerable for any established revoke or revokes he may have made just as if the missing card or cards had been continuously in his hand. When a card is missing, any player may search the other pack, the quitted tricks, or elsewhere for it.<sup>1</sup>

41. A player may not cut, shuffle, or deal for his partner if either adversary object.

41a. A player may not lift from the table and look at any of his cards until the end of the deal. The penalty for the violation of this law is 25 points in the adverse honor score for each card so examined.

## THE DECLARATION

42. The dealer, having examined his hand, must either pass or declare to win at least one odd trick,<sup>2</sup> either with a specified suit as trump or at no trump.

<sup>1</sup> The fact that a deal is concluded without any claim of irregularity shall be deemed as conclusive that such card was part of the pack during the deal.

<sup>2</sup> One trick more than six.

43. The dealer having declared or passed, each player in turn, beginning on the dealer's left, must pass, make a higher declaration, double the last declaration made by an opponent, or redouble an opponent's double, subject to the provisions of Law 56

44. When all four players pass their first opportunity to declare, the deal passes to the next player.

45. The order in value of declarations from the lowest up is clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, no trump.

To overbid a declaration, a player must bid, either

(a) An equal number of tricks of a more valuable declaration or

(b) A greater number of tricks.

*E.g.*, 3 spades over 3 diamonds; 5 clubs over 4 hearts; 4 diamonds over 3 no trump.

46. A player in his turn may overbid the previous adverse declaration any number of times, and may also overbid his partner, but he cannot overbid his own declaration which has been passed by the three others.<sup>1</sup>

47. The player who makes the final declaration<sup>2</sup> must play the combined hands, his partner becoming dummy, unless the suit or no trump finally declared was bid by the partner before it was called by the final declarer, in which case the partner, no matter what bids have intervened, must play the combined hands.

<sup>1</sup> Seven is the maximum declaration, and if it be made, the only bid thereafter permitted (except a double) is seven of a higher valued declaration.

<sup>2</sup> A declaration becomes final when it has been passed by three players.

48. When the player of the two hands (hereinafter termed "the declarer") wins at least as many tricks as he declared, he scores the full value of the tricks won (see Law 3).<sup>1</sup>

48a. When the declarer fails to win as many tricks as he declares, neither he nor his adversaries score anything toward the game, but his adversaries score in their honor column 50 points for each undertrick (*i.e.*, each trick short of the number declared). If the declaration be doubled, the adversaries score 100 points; if redoubled, 200 points for each undertrick.

49. If a player make a declaration (other than a double<sup>2</sup> or a pass<sup>3</sup>) out of turn either adversary may cancel or accept it.

When a declaration out of turn is canceled the player whose turn it was to declare bids, and the partner of the offending player may not thereafter participate in the declaration.

When a declaration out of turn is accepted it becomes the turn of the player to the left of the offender to declare, and the partner of the offending player retains the right to participate in the declaration.

After a declaration out of turn, should the adversary to the left of the offender either pass, double, or declare before the improper bid is accepted or canceled, such act accepts the bid and thereby makes it the turn of said adversary.

Should the adversary to the right of a player who has bid out of turn be the proper declarer, and should

<sup>1</sup> For amount scored by declarer, if doubled, see Laws 55 and 58.

<sup>2</sup> See Law 49a.

<sup>3</sup> See Law 49b.

he pass, double, or declare before the improper bid be accepted or canceled, such act is a cancelation of the improper declaration.

When a bid out of turn is canceled, it having been the turn of the partner of the offending player to declare, such turn passes to the adversary on the left of said partner.

49a. If a player double, or redouble when it is his partner's turn to declare, either adversary may

- (a) Accept the double or redouble as if it had been made in turn.
- (b) Demand a new deal.
- (c) Call the bid that was doubled or redoubled final, and elect whether the double or redouble stand.

There is no penalty for a double or redouble out of turn when the partner of the offender has already passed the declaration.<sup>1</sup>

When a declaration is made final neither a redouble nor any other declaration may be made.

49b. A pass out of turn cannot be penalized and does not affect the order of bidding. The bidding is continued by the player whose turn it was when the pass out of turn was made.

The player who has passed out of turn may only re-enter the bidding in case the declaration he has passed be overbid or doubled.

Should the adversary to the left of a player who passes out of turn be misled thereby and either pass or declare, such act accepts the pass as being in turn.

50. If a player make an insufficient declaration, either adversary may demand that it be made sufficient

<sup>1</sup> See Law 50b.

in the declaration named, in which case the partner of the declarer may not further declare unless an adversary subsequently bid or double.

50a. If a player who has been debarred from bidding under Laws 49, 50, 52, or 66, during the period of such prohibition, make any declaration (other than passing), either adversary may decide whether such declaration stand, and neither the offending player nor his partner may further participate in the bidding even if the adversaries double or declare.

50b. A penalty for a declaration out of turn (see Law 49), an insufficient declaration (see Law 50), or a bid when prohibited (see Law 50a) may not be enforced if either adversary pass, double, or declare before the penalty be demanded.<sup>1</sup>

50c. Laws which give to either adversary the right to enforce a penalty do not permit consultation. Either adversary may call attention to the offense and select or forego a penalty, or may pass the privilege to his partner. If consultation take place the right to demand a penalty is forfeited.<sup>2</sup> The first decision made by either adversary is final and cannot be altered.<sup>3</sup>

51. At any time during the declaration, a question asked by a player concerning any previous bid must be answered, but, after the final declaration has been

<sup>1</sup> When the penalty for an insufficient declaration is not demanded, the bid over which it was made may be repeated unless some higher bid has intervened.

<sup>2</sup> The question, "Partner, will you select the penalty, or shall I?" is a form of consultation and is not permitted.

<sup>3</sup> When a player directs his partner to select the penalty and the partner fails to do so or attempts to refer the privilege back, the right is forfeited.

accepted, if an adversary of the declarer inform his partner regarding any previous declaration, the declarer may call a lead from the adversary whose next turn it is to lead. If the dummy give such information to the declarer, either adversary of the declarer may call a lead when it is the next turn of the declarer to lead from either hand. A player, however, at any time may ask what declaration is being played and the question must be answered.

52. If before or during the declaration a player give any information concerning his hand other than that conveyed by a legitimate declaration, his partner may not thereafter participate in the bidding.

53. A double once made may not be altered.

No declaration may be altered after the next player acts.<sup>1</sup>

Before action by the next player a no-trump or suit declaration may be changed:

(a) To correct the amount of an insufficient bid.

(b) To correct the denomination but not the size of a bid in which, due to a *lapsus linguæ*, a suit or no trump has been called which the declarer did not intend to name.

No other alteration may be made.

54. After the final declaration has been accepted, the play begins; the player on the left of the declarer leads.

## DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

55. Doubling and redoubling doubles and quadruples the value of each trick over six, but it does not alter

<sup>1</sup> Such an alteration may be penalized as a bid out of turn. (See Law 49.)

the value of a declaration; *e.g.*, a declaration of "three clubs" is higher than "two spades" doubled or redoubled.

56. Any declaration may be doubled and redoubled once, but not more; a player may not double his partner's declaration nor redouble his partner's double, but he may redouble a declaration of his partner which has been doubled by an adversary.

The penalty for redoubling more than once is 100 points in the adverse honor score or a new deal; for doubling a partner's declaration, or redoubling a partner's double it is 50 points in the adverse honor score. Either adversary may demand any penalty enforceable under this law.

57. Doubling or redoubling reopens the bidding. When a declaration has been doubled or redoubled, any one of the three succeeding players, including the player whose declaration has been doubled, may, in his proper turn, make a further declaration of higher value.

58. When a player whose declaration has been doubled wins the declared number of tricks, he scores a bonus of 50 points in his honor score, and a further 50 points for each additional trick. When he or his partner has redoubled, he scores 100 points for making the contract and an additional 100 for each extra trick.

### DUMMY<sup>1</sup>

59. As soon as the player on the left of the declarer leads, the declarer's partner places his cards face up-

<sup>1</sup> For additional laws affecting dummy, see 51 and 93.

ward on the table, and the declarer plays the cards from that hand.

60. The partner of the declarer has all the rights of a player (including the right to call attention to a lead from the wrong hand), until his cards are placed face upward on the table.<sup>1</sup> He then becomes the dummy, and takes no part whatever in the play, except that he has the right

- (a) To call the declarer's attention to the fact that too many or too few cards have been played to a trick;
- (b) to correct an improper claim of either adversary;
- (c) to call attention to a trick erroneously taken by either side;
- (d) to participate in the discussion of any disputed question of fact after it has arisen between the declarer and either adversary;
- (e) to correct an erroneous score;
- (f) to consult with and advise the declarer as to which penalty to exact for a revoke;
- (g) to ask the declarer whether he have any of a suit he has renounced.

The dummy, if he have not intentionally looked at any card in the hand of a player, has also the following additional rights:

- (h) To call the attention of the declarer to an established adverse revoke;
- (i) to call the attention of the declarer to a card exposed by an adversary or to an adverse lead out of turn;
- (j) to call the attention of the declarer to any right which he may have under any law;
- (k) to direct the declarer who would concede a trick or tricks to the adversaries to play out the hand.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The penalty is determined by the declarer (see Law 67).

<sup>2</sup> See Law 95.

61. Should the dummy call attention to any other incident in the play in consequence of which any penalty might have been exacted, the declarer may not exact such penalty. Should the dummy avail himself of rights (*h*), (*i*), (*j*), or (*k*), after intentionally looking at a card in the hand of a player, the declarer may not benefit thereby.

62. If the dummy, by touching a card or otherwise, suggest the play of one of his cards, either adversary may require the declarer to play or not to play such card.

62a. If the dummy call to the attention of the declarer that he is about to lead from the wrong hand, either adversary may require that the lead be made from that hand.

63. Dummy is not subject to the revoke penalty; if he revoke and the error be not discovered until the trick be turned and quitted, whether by the rightful winners or not, the revoke may not be corrected.

64. A card from the declarer's hand is not played until actually quitted, but should he name or touch a card in the dummy, such card is played unless he say, "I arrange," or words to that effect. If he simultaneously touch two or more such cards, he may elect which to play.

### EXPOSED CARDS

65. The following are exposed cards:

- (1) Two or more cards played simultaneously;
- (2) a card dropped face upward on the table, even though snatched up so quickly that it cannot be named;
- (3) a card so held by a player that his partner sees any portion of its face;

- (4) a card mentioned by either adversary as being held in his or his partner's hand.

A card dropped on the floor or elsewhere below the table and not seen by the partner,<sup>1</sup> or so held that it is seen by an adversary but not by the partner, is not an exposed card.

### CARDS EXPOSED BEFORE PLAY

66. After the deal and before the declaration has been finally determined, if any player lead or expose a card, his partner may not thereafter bid or double during that declaration,<sup>2</sup> and the card, if it belong to an adversary of the eventual declarer, becomes an exposed card.<sup>3</sup> When the partner of the offending player is the original leader, the declarer may also prohibit the initial lead of the suit of the exposed card.

67. After the final declaration has been accepted and before the lead, if the partner of the proper leader expose or lead a card, the declarer may treat it as exposed or may call a suit from the proper leader. A card exposed by the leader, after the final declaration and before the lead, is subject to call.<sup>4</sup>

### CARDS EXPOSED DURING PLAY

68. An exposed card must be left face upward on the table.

Until it is played the declarer has the right to call it at any time when it is the turn of its owner to play or

<sup>1</sup> If seen by the partner it is an exposed card.

<sup>2</sup> See Law 50a.

<sup>3</sup> See Law 68.

<sup>4</sup> See Law 68.

lead, but the owner may play or lead it whenever he has the opportunity.

69. A player cannot be compelled to play a card which would oblige him to revoke.

70. Should an exposed card be called and the player be unable to obey the call because he is obliged to follow suit, the card is still exposed and the call may be repeated any number of times until the card is played.

71. Two or more cards played simultaneously by either of the declarer's adversaries give the declarer the right to call any one of such cards to the current trick and to treat the other card or cards as exposed.

72. Should an adversary of the declarer expose his last card before his partner play to the twelfth trick, the two cards in his partner's hand become exposed, must be laid face upward on the table, and are subject to call.

73. If, without waiting for his partner to play, either of the declarer's adversaries play or lead a winning card, as against the declarer and dummy and continue (without waiting for his partner to play) to lead several such cards, the declarer may demand that the partner of the player in fault win, if he can, the first or any other of these tricks. The other cards thus improperly played are exposed.

74. If either or both of the declarer's adversaries throw his or their cards face upward on the table, such cards are exposed and liable to be called; but if either adversary retain h's hand, he cannot be forced to abandon it. Cards exposed by the declarer are not liable to be called. If the declarer say, "I have the rest," or any words indicating the remaining tricks or

any number thereof are his, he may be required to place his cards face upward on the table. He is not then allowed to call any cards his adversaries may have exposed, nor to take any finesse, not previously proven a winner, unless he announce it when making his claim.

75. If a player who has rendered himself liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called (Laws 80, 86, and 92) fail to play as directed, or if, when called on to lead one suit, he lead another, having in his hand one or more cards of the suit demanded (Laws 66, 76, and 93), or if, when called upon to win or lose a trick, he fail to do so when he can (Laws 73, 80, and 92), or if, when called upon not to play a suit, he fail to play as directed (Laws 66, 67) he is liable to the penalty for revoke (Law 84), unless such play be corrected before the trick be turned and quitted.

#### LEADS OUT OF TURN

76. If an adversary of the declarer lead out of turn, the declarer may treat the card so led as exposed or may call a suit as soon as it is the turn of either adversary to lead. Should they lead simultaneously, the lead from the proper hand stands, and the other card is exposed.

77. If the declarer lead out of turn, either from his own hand or dummy, he incurs no penalty, but he may not rectify the error unless directed to do so by an adversary.<sup>1</sup> If the second hand play, the lead is accepted.

78. If an adversary of the declarer lead out of turn,

<sup>1</sup> The rule in Law 50c as to consultations governs the right of adversaries to consult as to whether such direction be given.

and the declarer follow either from his own hand or dummy, the lead is accepted. If the declarer before playing refuse to accept the lead, the leader may be penalized as provided in Law 76.

79. If a player called on to lead a suit have none of it, the penalty is paid.

### CARDS PLAYED IN ERROR

80. Should the fourth hand, not being dummy or declarer, play before the second, the latter may be required to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led or to win or lose the trick. In such case, if the second hand be void of the suit led, the declarer in lieu of any other penalty may call upon the second hand to play the highest card of any designated suit. If he name a suit of which the second hand is void, the penalty is paid.<sup>1</sup>

81. When any one, except dummy, omits playing to a trick, and such error is not corrected until he has played to the next, the declarer or either of his adversaries, as the case may be, may claim a new deal; should either decide that the deal stand, the surplus card (at the end of the hand) is considered played to the imperfect trick, but does not constitute a revoke therein.<sup>2</sup>

82. When any one, except dummy, plays two or more cards to the same trick and the mistake is not corrected, he is answerable for any consequent revokes he may make. When the error is detected during the play, the tricks may be counted face downward, to see

<sup>1</sup> Should the declarer play third hand before the second hand, the fourth hand may without penalty play before his partner.

<sup>2</sup> As to the right of adversaries to consult, see Law 50c.

if any contain more than four cards; should this be the case, the trick which contains a surplus card or cards may be examined and such card or cards restored to the original holder.<sup>1</sup>

### THE REVOKE<sup>2</sup>

83. A revoke occurs when a player, other than dummy, holding one or more cards of the suit led, plays a card of a different suit. It becomes an established revoke when the trick in which it occurs is turned and quitted by the rightful winners<sup>3</sup> (*i. e.*, the hand removed from the trick after it has been turned face downward on the table), or when either the revoking player or his partner, whether in turn or otherwise, leads or plays to the following trick.

84. The penalty for each established revoke is:

- (a) When the declarer revokes, he cannot score for tricks and his adversaries add 100 points to their score in the honor column for each revoke, in addition to any penalty to which they may be entitled for his failure to make good his declaration.
- (b) When either of the adversaries revokes, the declarer for the first revoke may either score 100 points in his honor column or take three tricks from his opponents and add them to his own.<sup>4</sup> Such tricks may assist the declarer to make good his declaration,<sup>5</sup> but shall not entitle him to any further bonus

<sup>1</sup> Either adversary may decide which card shall be considered played to the trick which contains more than four cards, but such decision shall not affect the winning or losing of the trick.

<sup>2</sup> See Law 75.

<sup>3</sup> Except as provided in Law 85.

<sup>4</sup> The dummy may advise the declarer which penalty to exact.

<sup>5</sup> They may enable him to win a game and if that game conclude the rubber, give him the 250 points bonus.

in the honor column, by reason of the declaration having been doubled or redoubled, nor to a slam or little slam not otherwise obtained.<sup>1</sup> (See Laws 7, 8, and 58.) For each subsequent revoke he adds 100 points to his honor score.

The value of their honors is the only score that can be made by a revoking side.

85. A player may ask his partner if he have a card of the suit which he has renounced; should the question be asked before the trick be turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish a revoke, and the error may be corrected unless the question be answered in the negative, or unless the revoking player or his partner have led or played to the following trick.

85a. Should the dummy leave the table during the play, he may ask his adversaries to protect him from revokes during his absence; such protection is generally called "the courtesies of the table" or "the courtesies due an absentee."

If he make such request the penalty for a revoke made by the declarer during the dummy's absence may not be enforced unless in due season an adversary have asked the declarer whether he have a card of the suit he has renounced.

86. If a player correct his mistake in time to save a revoke, any player or players who have followed him may withdraw his or their cards and substitute others, and the cards so withdrawn are not exposed. If the player in fault be one of the declarer's adversaries, the

<sup>1</sup> The value of the three tricks, doubled or redoubled, as the case may be, is counted in the trick score.

card played in error is exposed, and the declarer may call it whenever he pleases, or he may require the offender to play his highest or lowest card of the suit to the trick.

86a. If the player in fault be the declarer, either adversary may require him to play the highest or lowest card of the suit in which he has renounced, provided both his adversaries have played to the current trick; but this penalty may not be exacted from the declarer when he is fourth in hand, nor can it be enforced at all from the dummy.

87. At the end of the play the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks. If the cards have been mixed, the claim may be urged and proved if possible; but no proof is necessary and the claim is established if, after it is made, the accused player or his partner mix the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries.

88. A claim that a revoke has been made cannot be allowed after the cards have been cut for the following deal, or when the deal concludes the rubber, after the score has been made up and agreed upon or after the cards have been cut for any purpose connected with the next rubber.

89. Should both sides revoke, the only score permitted is for honors. In such case, if one side revoke more than once, the penalty of 100 points for each extra revoke is scored by the other side.

#### GENERAL LAWS

90. A trick turned and quitted may not be looked at (except under Law 82) until the end of the play.

The penalty for the violation of this law is 25 points in the adverse honor score.

91. Any player during the play of a trick or after the four cards are played, and before the trick is turned and quitted, may demand that the cards be placed before their respective players.

92. When an adversary of the declarer, before his partner plays, calls attention to the trick, either by saying it is his, or, without being requested to do so, by naming his card or drawing it toward him, the declarer may require such partner to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led, or to win or lose the trick.

93. An adversary of the declarer may call his partner's attention to the fact that he is about to play or lead out of turn; but if, during the play, he make any unauthorized reference to any incident of the play, the declarer may call a suit from the adversary whose next turn it is to lead. If the dummy similarly offend, either adversary may call a lead when it is the next turn of the declarer to lead from either hand.

94. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred, the offender is bound to give reasonable time for the decision of his adversaries.

95. If the declarer concede one or more tricks and the concession be accepted, such trick or tricks belong to the adversaries even if it would have been impossible for the declarer to lose such trick or tricks had the hand been played out.<sup>1</sup>

If an adversary of the declarer concede a trick or

<sup>1</sup> Unless before the acceptance of the concession, the dummy, who has not looked at any cards in the hand of an adversary, demand that the deal be played out. (See Law 60*k*.)

tricks, such concession is binding if agreed to at the time by the partner of the conceding player. Silence shall be regarded as consent.

### **NEW CARDS**

96. Unless a pack be imperfect, no player has the right to call for one new pack. When fresh cards are demanded, two packs must be furnished. When they are produced during a rubber, the adversaries of the player demanding them have the choice of the new cards. If it be the beginning of a new rubber, the dealer, whether he or one of his adversaries call for the new cards, has the choice. New cards cannot be substituted after the pack has been cut for a new deal.

97. A card or cards torn or marked must be replaced by agreement or new cards furnished.

### **BYSTANDERS**

98. While a bystander, by agreement among the players, may decide any question, he should not say anything unless appealed to; and if he make any remark which calls attention to an oversight affecting the score, or to the exaction of a penalty, he is liable to be called upon by the players to pay the stakes (not extras) lost.

### **ETIQUETTE OF AUCTION**

In the game of Auction slight intimations convey much information. The laws fix penalties for an offense. To offend against etiquette is more serious than to offend against a law; for in the latter case the offender

is subject to the prescribed penalties; in the former his adversaries are without redress.

1. Declaration should be made in a simple manner, thus: "one heart," "one no trump," "pass," "double"; they should be made orally and not by gesture.

2. Aside from his legitimate declaration, a player should not indicate by word or gesture the nature of his hand, or his approval or disapproval of a play, bid, or double.

3. If a player demand that the cards be placed, he should do so for his own information and not to call his partner's attention to any card or play.

4. An opponent of the declarer should not lead until the preceding trick has been turned and quitted; nor, after having led a winning card, should he draw another from his hand before his partner has played to the current trick.

5. A card should not be played with such emphasis as to draw attention to it, nor should a player detach one card from his hand and subsequently play another.

6. A player should not purposely incur a penalty because he is willing to pay it, nor should he make a second revoke to conceal a first.

7. Conversation during the play should be avoided, as it may annoy players at the table or at other tables in the room.

8. The dummy should not leave his seat to watch his partner play. He should not call attention to the score nor to any card or cards that he or the other players hold.

9. If a player say, "I have the rest," or any words indicating that the remaining tricks, or any number

thereof, are his, and one or both of the other players expose his or their cards, or request him to play out the hand, he should not allow any information so obtained to influence his play.

10. A player having been cut out of one table should not seek admission in another unless willing to cut for the privilege of entry.

**THE END**

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